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John o' Jamestown

By VAUGHAN KESTER



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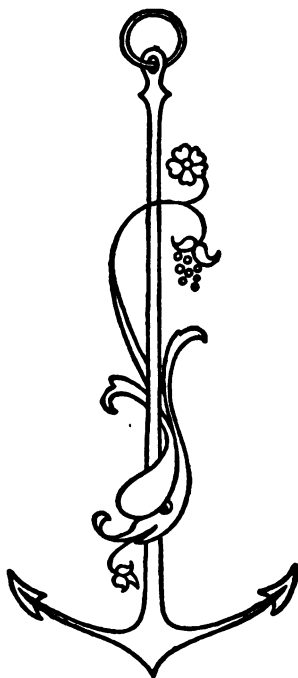
JOHN O' JAMESTOWN

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BY

VAUGHAN KESTER

AUTHOR OF THE LANDRAYS



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CHAPTER ONE

THE Farradays have always had a hankering for authorship, my father having written a book on Church discipline, for which he was straightway disciplined himself by his Bishop; and it is tradition amongst us that in his youth my great-grandfather was associated in some manner with one William Caxton, merchant, who caused to be printed the first book in England. Tradition admits of some divergence of opinion as to the part he played in this honourable enterprise, but we Farradays are disposed to think the connection must have been as necessary to William Caxton as it was creditable to my ancestor. In my own case, I am aware that my matter may be superior to my manner, since I am more used to handling musket than pen, while such honours as I have won have been gained in a region where there is greater need of manual skill than scholarship. Nor can I forget that Captain Smith has set down the history of those first years at James Town in his own book, telling it better than can ever be told elsewhere; and now he who proved himself fittest to deal with the savages, and with those amongst us who were little better than savages, who exceeded us all in energy, courage, and woodcraft, lies buried in St. Sepulchre's Church, with the noise of London rising and falling like the roar of the sea about him.

This August day in the year of grace 1645, I begin my weighty task, sitting at ease on my porch, with the broad river before me, and the summer sun blazing high in the heavens, with my dog asleep at my feet, and a half-

smoked pipe of my best tobacco in my hand, which invites me more than does my pen, for though King James himself saw fit to denounce it as worthy only to regale the devil with after dinner, or some such expression, he liked the revenue it brought him well enough; while we planters, more consistent than he, early learned to value it for the solace it gave as well as for the riches to be got from its culture; and truly it has wrought a wonderful change in this land, for where so short a time ago one might almost have known the men of Virginia by name, so few were they, there are now some fifteen thousand, and there comes annually into our waters upwards of thirty trading vessels, and only last winter there lay in our harbours at one time twelve ships from England, a like number from Holland, and seven from New England.

But I am loath to begin. I had rather sit here giving myself up to memories and dreams! And why not—with the scent of the honeysuckle strong in the air, and the murmur that ever comes up from the great placid river, the league-long ripple from its shores filling my ears; while to the right and to the left of my lawn, which runs down to the very sands, I can look out over my wide tobacco fields, with the log huts of my servants in the shade of the still dense, impenetrable forest beyond.

My own house is of logs, too, though I purpose soon to build me one of bricks. It shall be patterned like the home of some lesser English squire, or that vicarage in the north of England where all things that have been most important in my life had their beginning. I have only to close my eyes to see that greener English turf, and our garden with its friar's walk, under the old yew trees, and the distant hills with their ever changing tints.

Ours was the fell country, and lay close to the Scottish line; indeed, of a clear day we could look almost over

into Scotland. There was no small hazard in being thus near our northern neighbours, since it was their practice to harry the dales and drive off horses and cattle, when they were content not to murder and outrage. Every considerable house had its strong peel tower into which the family withdrew in time of danger, and from which, being relatively safe, they might observe the raiders as they drove off their four-footed booty; and from which also they could later issue to gather their friends for pursuit.

I own it is not in the nature of Englishmen weakly to admit of wrong doing, and there was much in our judgment to excuse the herds of small, shaggy cattle which grazed contentedly on our fells; for I, as did my elders, believed the Scots were all thieves, and that there was some magic saving grace in the thick speech of our north country folk, since it became an honourable and gallant adventure even when they slipped across the border and came back with a proper spoil, though I early knew they sometimes came back empty-handed, or worse still, not at all. I was equally certain that it was a villainous, criminal thing for the Scots to sweep into the country like a cloud of hungry locusts. What made this difference I was too young rightly to comprehend, but I knew this much past all peradventure, the Scots to the last man were knaves, while the sole virtue of that region abode on our side of the border; and if one had any doubts that our ancient enemy was hopelessly in the wrong in all conceivable matters, one had only to hear of Johnny Armstrong of Gilnochy to be convinced of the soundness of our north country creed. Now this Johnny Armstrong, in whose tragic history I took a somewhat cruel joy, when summoned to appear before his own king, went dressed more like a prince than a borderer, attended by half a hundred followers, and no doubt preceded by his own evil fame,

which so angered the king that he hanged the lot. One would scarce expect greater assurance than this that the Scots knew they were in the wrong.

My father was vicar of a small and exceedingly poor parish which lay far up on the fells, where the wind blew cold in August even, when the moors were one wide garden of blazing purple heather. His church was a small stone edifice which dated back to Saxon times; indeed, the country had known Roman, Saxon, and Dane, as well as the later Norman. Men had fought and tramped and pillaged far and near over those wide uplands, and always there had been the Scots to be reckoned with. The antiquity of the place was fully attested by the old Roman wall which was at the back of our very garden, by the old Roman well in our small meadow, and by the copper coins and leaden seals which the ploughmen sometimes brought to my father from the fields; and there still were traces of what my father said was a Roman camp on the edge of the beck that flowed through our valley, while built into one corner of our church was a slab of stone with a curious inscription, which certain learned men had declared to be Runic, while others equally learned asserted it to be Greek, but all were agreed that it was very wonderful and very ancient.

My first definite memory from which I am able to advance apparently without break or lapse is of one summer day when I was—but I'll not say how old, or rather how young I was at this time, lest my reader may think I am having recourse to my imagination rather than my memory. This day I was clearly aware that something was wrong with our household, for suddenly and without warning I, Richard Farraday, had ceased to be the supremely important personage in that small circle which I had always imagined myself to be. I traced my changed

estate to the coming that very morning of an old woman from the village. She had arrived on foot, carrying a large bundle, and complaining bitterly of the distance she had come, of the road, and of the heat. Within an incredibly short space of time she had usurped the chief authority about the house, even giving orders to my father, who quickly and meekly did her bidding. My mother was confined to her room; she was sick, Meg, our cook, told me, and I was excluded from that part of the house where she lay, but I privately determined to place my observations of the old dame before her at the first opportunity. I had already spoken to my father, and he had only laughed, but I trusted to the fact already known to me, that women were more apt to deal roundly with women than were men; and though my mother was gentleness itself, I doubted not she would be fully equal to the occasion.

But as the day lengthened, my fortunes seemed to go from bad to worse. My father wholly ceased to notice me, and Meg, whom hitherto I had always found companionable and disposed for conversation, would scarce answer any civil question I put to her, finally ordering me from the house altogether. Never before had boy been so betrayed in his tenderest affections.

In my grief I withdrew to the most remote spot I was permitted to visit alone, namely, the field back of the vicarage. Here was a small stream where the day before I had been labouring to construct a dam of turf and stones, but over night there had been a rain, and even my dam was gone; but this last was something I could repair, and I was hard at work on a much greater structure than the one of the day previous when I heard my father calling me. I found him striding to and fro in the garden and looking mightily perturbed, I thought.

"Where have you been, Dick?" he questioned me, pausing in his walk.

"Down in the meadow by the beck."

"When will you get that dam built,—the peaty turf is a poor material."

"The rains come and wash it away," I said.

"And it rained last night. Well, God willing, you may have something better than the beck to play with."

"There's nothing better than the beck," I said.

"We will see, Dick," he said, patting me on the head.

"How would you like a babe, say, for a playfellow?"

I shook my head vigorously.

"No?" and I could see that he was somewhat crestfallen by my prompt negative.

"No," I said, and just then there came a tiny wail from the house, a cry I did not then understand, but my father turned swiftly on his heel and strode into the house.

I stood staring after him, not a little puzzled by his strange speech about babes, but firmly resolved that I would have none of them. While I stood thus, my father came from the house with as much haste as he had entered it.

"Come here, Dick," he called as he crossed toward me.

I could see that he was smiling, and he was rubbing the palms of his hands together, a way he had when he was pleased or in an especially good humour.

"So you want no babes?" he said, chuckling softly, as we met midway of the frair's walk.

"No," I said again. I was quite sure of that.

"Not a sister, eh? You are sure, Dick—a baby sister no bigger than that?" And he held his hands a little space apart.

The size of the baby sister as he thus indicated it, I own, somewhat appealed to me. The babes I knew, not

many to be sure, were like so many great pink and white slugs, stupid, inert things that slept away their days and imposed silence on all who came near them; but a babe of the size my father measured with his hands might, I could conceive, have some special merit.

"You'd better not say no," he said, shaking his head and chuckling. "It would be a serious thing to say no, Dick."

"If it's no bigger than that——" I began warily.

"I'll swear it's not."

"Then it's here!" I cried.

"Just arrived," he answered, laughing outright.

This, I remember, quite took my breath away, for instantly I thought of the old woman and her bundle, and also there passed through my head a deal of nonsense that I had heard talked about witches. Clearly the dame had seemed most evilly disposed toward me, having corrupted Meg's good nature, as I knew, to such an extent that I durst not even venture into the kitchen; and now she had wrought this last injury, from which I foresaw I was to be the chief sufferer. I was disposed to pity my father, that he should be so put upon in this matter, for I knew how he abhorred anything that savoured of magic, witchcraft, or priestcraft—which to my mind were all very much one.

"She brought it!" I said. I was still thinking of the old dame.

"Who, Dick?" And my father looked rather blank.

"Why, the old woman that came this morning," I said.

"I'd hardly say that, Dick, but she has had a deal to do with it, to go by her own talk," said my father, laughing.

But I was not to see this baby sister then, for my father again left me, while I remained out under the yews, having no place else to go, and wishing fully to consider the

old dame's culpable interference in our affairs, and to devise means for her undoing, since I was not yet sure we really desired the babe, in spite of its small size.

I was deep in my scheming when Meg called to me from the kitchen that my dinner was ready. Now I had intended Meg should learn that while I was not one to bear malice, yet it was not in my nature to play fast and loose with my friends, and that neither would I be so used. I determined that something in my very manner should make this plain to her when I entered the kitchen. But she had placed a table for me by the window, covering it with a snowy cloth, and on this had set out my dinner—bread, meat, cheese, milk, and a plump gooseberry-tart. In the face of such tender considerations for my preferences I felt I could not be wholly distant, especially as Meg herself greeted me with her usual wide, good-natured smile.

When I had finished my dinner I told Meg I greatly desired to see my mother, but she would not hear to this; so I said I would see my father. But my father was above in my mother's room, Meg told me, and to see one would be to see the other, and that could not be. I argued the point with her for some time, but she remained amazingly obdurate. Then just as I had ceased to entreat, my father came into the room wearing his hat and cloak, by which I knew was going abroad on some errand.

"I thought I would find you here, Dick," he said. "I am going to the village."

"Take me with you, father?" I said, for though the village was only a matter of three miles distant, I seldom went there.

My father hesitated, then he said:

"You may come if you think you can keep pace with me."

The long northern twilight had set in, and though it

was midsummer there was a cold wind blowing. As we went from our walled garden with its yews and beeches, in which the rooks were nesting, the mellow light brought the bare fells close about us, but the sheltered valley we were leaving had a wonderfully peaceful look; it seemed so sufficient to itself, with the great square tower of its church half hidden by the trees, and its scattered farms. In the winter, as I knew, when the snow lay for days together in vast drifts on the fell side, none came and went from it. We were quite shut off from all the world.

Presently and we had left the valley behind us, and had come out upon a high moor. Here there were neither farms nor fields, but all was open country. We crossed this moor and went down into a small wooded dale where our beck, now much augmented by its juncture with other becks, had grown to be quite a river; this we crossed by leaping from stone to stone, since there was no bridge.

It may have been the hour, coupled with the sombre grandeur of that lonely landscape, but I was mightily depressed. The hills had never before been so steep, nor the road so stony; but at last the village was reached.

Just as we entered it a great travelling carriage with a mighty rumble of wheels swung down upon us from about a sudden turn in the single crooked street. My father had barely time to snatch me to one side as it rolled by. Close following it came two mounted men, who, but for him, would have ridden over me, since I was venturing back into the very middle of the street the instant the carriage had passed, to stare after it.

"Eh, Dick, where are your eyes?" he said.

It was now nearly dark, and we lingered for some little time in the village, my father having business in several of the shops. At length, however, we were ready to return home, and set out briskly on our walk of three miles.

We had gone perhaps two-thirds of the distance, that is, we had come to the ford I have already spoken of, when my father drew my attention to a light in the road before us. Someone was slowly mounting the steep ascent, pausing at intervals, for now and again the light, evidently a lanthorn, was stationary.

Our advance was the more rapid, and presently we heard the beat of hoofs, while the sound of voices floated back to us. Then some great dark object rolled out upon the moor and was silhouetted against the lighter sky. It was a travelling carriage, and I at once reached the conclusion that it was the same one we had met on the way into the village.

The carriage came to a stop there on the edge of the moor, and the light, which we now saw was carried by a man on foot, came toward us, bringing the two mounted men into the circle of its illumination. We saw them swing from their saddles, and then they and the light went forward a pace or two.

By this time we were quite close, my father and I, so close that one of several men who were standing by the carriage became aware of our presence, for we heard him cry out:

“Captain Maxwell, sir, thank God—here is someone now!”

CHAPTER TWO

IT was the man who held the lanthorn who had spoken, and now he swung forward the light so that it shone into my father's face, which afforded us opportunity to see the speaker himself. By his dress and appearance I guessed him to be a servant of some sort; that he was a south country man I further knew by his speech.

"What is the matter here?" asked my father.

"Matter enough," said the man gruffly. "But these are roads for a Christian country," and he swore roundly under his breath.

While he was still muttering there was a movement in the group of men about the coach, and a cloaked and booted figure pushed into the circle of light. What little of the newcomer's dress might be seen beneath the ample folds of his cloak was plain and travel stained, but even so I divined that he was no servant. He took the lanthorn from the fellow with whom my father had been speaking, and held it aloft. A glance sufficed, for he said politely enough, returning the lanthorn to the man:

"Sir, we are in something of a quandary——"

"It's these damnable roads, Captain Maxwell!" cried the serving man in a tone of such exasperation that I knew he must be the coachman. "And her ladyship being in her ladyship's condition——"

For answer Captain Maxwell shot the fellow a glance that instantly stopped his mouth.

"I daresay you have met with some accident," said my father, looking toward the coach.

"What is the distance to the nearest house?" asked Captain Maxwell, ignoring my father's question.

"A mile on, and a scant mile at that," said my father.

"Better drive for it, if it's fit for her ladyship," I heard the coachman mutter.

He was a hard-featured fellow, and it was evident that our north country roads were like a bad dream to him, he could not forget them.

"And who lives there?" asked Captain Maxwell.

"I do," said my father.

Once again Captain Maxwell took the lanthorn from the coachman and raised it so that he might look into my father's face, whom he favoured with a moment's close scrutiny.

"Humph!" he said. "I take it you are a parson, sir."

"I have that honour," replied my father stiffly, for there was something in Captain Maxwell's speech, or rather in the manner of his speech, which was not entirely pleasant.

I had taken a good look at him when he raised the lanthorn the second time, and I had seen a rather heavy, florid face, where the dominant expression seemed to be pride.

"We have come how far from yonder village?" Maxwell asked.

"Two miles."

"There are inns there?"

"Poor enough places," said my father.

"Nothing where a lady might lodge?"

"The fare would be of the commonest," answered my father.

I understood only a small part of the conversation that followed, but this much I comprehended quite clearly; Captain Maxwell was travelling north to Edinburgh

with his kinswoman; there was urgent need of haste, and he had expected to cross into Scotland that very night, but the lady had been taken suddenly ill, and it was now evident they must abandon all idea of going forward.

My father had listened with growing impatience to Captain Maxwell's explanation.

"Since this is so, sir," he said, interrupting him, "the best thing to be done is to order your coach on to the vicarage, since there is no fit place in the village to lodge a lady in the condition you describe."

"A moment, sir!" said Captain Maxwell.

He turned from us and went toward the little group about the coach, where the blackness of the night swallowed him up. We heard him speak to someone in a language that was strange to me, as it had a good right to be, since I knew only English with such variations as the dwellers on our fells had given it, but my father told me afterward that he had spoken in French. He was answered in the same tongue, and an instant later returned to where we stood, accompanied by a second gentleman, the like of whom, both as to dress and appearance, I had never seen before. He was tall and slight and dark, with a moustache and tiny pointed beard of a fashion as strange to me as his speech. A great velvet cloak encompassed him, from under the skirt of which trailed a long rapier. His face as I saw it in the uncertain light of the lanthorn was very handsome, being that of a man neither young nor old.

As the two approached us Captain Maxwell said something to his companion, still speaking in French, and nodded toward my father, whereupon the foreign gentleman swept off his hat, exposing a head covered by a profusion of glossy black curls, and made my father the genteelst bow I had ever seen.

"I fear, sir," said Captain Maxwell, addressing my father, "that we are constrained to accept your hospitality, and I daresay that one of the servants would better take my horse and ride back to the village for the surgeon."

"It will save time," answered my father, but something in his voice told me that he was not too well pleased, and later I knew that it was the presence of the foreign gentleman that had wrought a change in his feeling. Yet a moment later and we were all going toward the vicarage, while there died away in the distance behind us the clatter of hoofs, as the Captain's man rode back to the village.

As my father had said, our vicarage was no more than a mile distant from the place where we had overtaken the carriage, and this mile was quickly traversed; but the vicarage rested so snugly within the high walls of our garden, and was so hidden by beeches and yews, that it was not to be seen until one was fairly before it. My father showed the coachman the gate by which he might enter, and then we drew aside while the great carriage rolled up to our door and stood.

As we ourselves came to the door, Meg appeared bearing a light, called to the front of the house by the rumble of wheels, as she afterward told me. On her broad, good-natured face was an expression of utter astonishment, as there might well be, since in all the years she had lived with us nothing like this had happened. It occurred to me that I had a deal to tell her when there should be a fitting occasion for my confidences.

"See that the guest chamber is made ready, Meg," ordered my father.

"Yes," said Meg, but she made no move, so taken was she with the coach, the like of which she had perhaps never seen before.

"Make haste, Meg," said my father sharply, and very reluctantly Meg retired into the house.

Meantime Captain Maxwell had opened the coach door, saying some word to those within, and now there stepped out a tall woman with black hair, black eyes, straight black brows, and a rich olive skin. I seemed to know instinctively, however, that this was not Captain Maxwell's kinswoman; certainly she moved not as one who was ill and suffering. Even while I was staring into the depths of the coach with all my might, and no doubt with my two eyes as round as saucers, I heard a soft voice speaking in French to Captain Maxwell; and then the lady herself appeared, and taking the Captain's hand, came very wearily and languidly from the carriage.

The candle which Meg had left with my father and the lanthorn held by one of the serving men made it light so that we could very plainly see the lady. Her face was very pale, I recall, and the lines about her mouth were drawn as if with suffering, but for all that she bore herself with a brave composure. Captain Maxwell and the woman half supported, half carried her into the house, where she sank into the chair my father found for her. The foreign gentleman had remained without, and I saw nothing more of him until later, but for the moment I had lost all interest in him.

The lady glanced about her, and then up into Captain Maxwell's face, who was bending over her.

"Why do you bring me here?" I heard her ask in English, but I noticed that there was some quality to her speech which was not English.

"You can go no further, Madame, with safety," said the Captain gravely.

"Are we in Scotland, then, so soon?" she asked eagerly, raising her great dark eyes to his, and I saw on her face,

in spite of the suffering she was bravely trying to hide, a sudden look of triumph.

"Not yet, Madame——"

"We must on then!" she cried.

"Nay, Madame, no further to-night."

"Yes, to-night, Captain Maxwell," she cried imperiously.

"I assure you, Madame, we must stop here," and in the Captain's manner there was a settled stubbornness that did not seem to admit of argument. He added: "We have asked too much of you already."

"But I am quite able to go forward."

"It is hazarding too much, Madame."

"No hazard is too great. Pray do not consider me." She spoke with a fine courage, but the Captain only shook his head.

"Here we must remain, Madame," he said quietly.

"This gentleman has come to our rescue, and we are not far from the Scottish line—let that comfort you."

The lady glanced toward my father; apparently she had not been aware of his presence in the room.

"We are very grateful, sir, but I fear I shall be a troublesome guest."

Yet the manner in which she spoke made me think that no trouble would be too great, and in answering her this was what my father himself said.

Here Meg came into the room with word that the guest chamber was ready.

"Come, Madame," said Captain Maxwell, and he bent close and whispered something in the lady's ear.

Whatever it was that he said it influenced her at once, for she gave her hand to her woman, who all this while had been standing behind her chair, and, preceded by Meg carrying a candle, went slowly from the room.

As I have already said, the foreign gentleman had not entered the house with us, but had remained in the garden; now Captain Maxwell, muttering an apology, stepped forth to seek him; and a moment later when Meg came downstairs I was left with her, while my father went to the stable to see to the servants and horses. I would willingly have gone with him, but he seemed not to desire it, indeed, he told Meg that I was to remain indoors.

This while the two gentlemen were pacing to and fro before the house. I could just distinguish their tall cloaked forms in the darkness, and hear their voices, though no word of what they said did I understand, since it was all in French. And this French was a source of infinite astonishment to our Meg, for labour with her as I might, I was not able to convince her that they could really understand each other as she and I understood each other when we spoke in English. Yet we agreed perfectly on one point, namely, that the Frenchman was beyond doubt a Papist, and to be feared accordingly; which shows that our religious instruction had been of the soundest possible description.

But presently as we watched and listened at the door we heard the beat of hoofs on the road before the vicarage. It was the serving man, and with him was the surgeon, who was shown at once to the lady's room by Meg.

Usually I was early put to bed, but that night I escaped this ignominy. Perhaps because of the great excitement that reigned in our house my father was far too occupied to think of me; at any rate I discovered that so long as I kept myself reasonably out of the way I was not to be interfered with, and I established myself in our small parlour where were Captain Maxwell and the foreign gentleman, both of whom had followed the surgeon in. They now stood about in heavy silence, though from time to time

they spoke together anxiously enough, as I judged by the expression on their faces.

As I say, I hung about the parlour, enjoying the privilege of remaining up as long as I liked, and for the once I got a surfeit of late hours. But before this happened I remember there was a deal of going and coming from the strange lady's room, in which not only the surgeon and Meg were involved, but the old dame from the village as well. When I became aware of this, certain dark suspicions began to obtrude themselves on my sleepy faculties.

Had I dared, I should have liked to speak of them to Captain Maxwell, but something told me that a small boy with the best of intentions even, and wishing him well, might find it difficult to share his confidences with so austere a man; and I wisely forbore to make the effort. The foreign gentleman I should not have feared in the same degree, for more than once, when his eyes had chanced to rest upon me, they had lost their troubled expression and he had even smiled, showing the whitest of teeth.

It was near to midnight when Meg brought the gentlemen their supper, for Captain Maxwell had told my father that retire they could not until they knew that all was well with his kinswoman. I must have fallen asleep about this time, for a little later Meg found me curled up on an oak settle in the corner. Taking me in her arms she carried me upstairs to her room and put me down on her own bed. I was too far gone for the want of sleep to protest, and after the hard oak bench the bed felt soft and comfortable.

"What is it, Meg?" I managed to ask.

"Eh, it's the sand-man; he's been about!" she said, laughing.

It must have been the sand-man, as she said, for my heavy lids closed, and I was fast asleep on the moment, and while I slept there was born under our roof a second babe. And thus it was that the two little maids came to dwell with us—the fair one who was my sister, and the dark one who was not.

CHAPTER THREE

IT was broad day when I came to consciousness, with the events of the previous night more like the uncertain memory of some dream than aught else; and in truth Captain Maxwell, the French gentleman, and the strange lady were such notable personages to have come into my uneventful life, it is no wonder that at first I could scarce bring myself to believe in their reality.

As I lay there arguing with myself the very fact of that meeting on the moor, I became aware of voices in the yard, and slipping off the bed ran to the window which overlooked the back of the house. Rising on tiptoe to peer out, there first fell under my eyes the huge travelling coach of the strangers, so I knew at once that it was not all a dream, as I had at first been disposed to think. Furthermore, I could see three of the serving men at work grooming the horses, while a fourth—it was the hard-featured coachman who had first spoken with us on the moor—I could not see but could hear; he was chaffing Meg by the kitchen door, and I was pleased to note that she gave him back as good as he sent, for our Meg had a ponderous but effective wit.

I observed that the three men busy with the horses were delighted with the sharpness, or rather the bluntness, of her speech, since they found space to pause from time to time to take part in the conversation; mainly, however, with the evident purpose of encouraging Meg, which was needless.

As I watched and listened, Captain Maxwell came suddenly about a corner of the house. Instantly there was quiet, the men went at their horses' backs and legs in silence; while their chaffing comrade moved out across the yard.

"Your orders, sir?" I heard him say.

I stole downstairs to the kitchen. My thoughts were of breakfast just then, but I found Meg had prepared for me, and as I sat at table, she, as she moved about the room, told me of all that had happened during the night; for Meg and I were sworn friends, though on occasion her temper could be of a most uncertain quality, especially on baking day, when, if ever, I was disposed to friendship and intimacy. But her recent wordy encounter with Captain Maxwell's hard-faced serving man had left her in such high good-humour that she rattled off into her story without any prompting from me.

To begin with, she told me of the second small maid that had been ushered into this world whilst I slept. She also told me, as one deeply versed in such matters, that my sister gave astonishing promise, and that shortly I would be permitted to see her; which prospective favour I fear aroused me to no great joy. But I asked her how my mother was, for there I was really concerned. Meg assured me she was in the best of spirits.

"In no such dumps as when you came!" she added, which I thought was unnecessary; but then a long acquaintance may have its embarrassments, as who has not found out.

"And the strange lady, Meg?" I asked.

"Poor young thing! The surgeon do seem in doubt about her," said Meg.

And instantly she looked mighty grave.

"Is she not well?" I asked.

"No, she beant," said Meg.

"When will they go away?"

"They can't go while she is lying there hovering betwixt this world and the next—eh, but even you might know that, Dicky."

That day I lived unregarded for the most part, but my perfect freedom soon began to pall on me; I fancied it smacked too much of sheer neglect, and as the morning advanced my spirits steadily declined, for I was conscious that some potent change was making itself manifest in my surroundings. I had never known the house so silent, and though it stood open to the day, with the sun streaming in at doors and windows, there was yet something as intangible as a child's passing humour, and as real as a feared and forbidding presence, that sent me forth. In the garden was the French gentleman and Captain Maxwell, and the measured pace of their booted feet on the packed earth of the friar's walk, and the murmur of their voices, followed me as I wandered about the place.

At length I was summoned indoors by Meg, who took me upstairs to my mother's room to see my new sister, but first she held forth in an improving manner on the moral value of the opportunity that would henceforth be mine for the cultivation of such virtues as gentleness and self-sacrifice. If aught was needed to complete my feeling of profound depression, Meg's homily would have sufficed, since already my nose was somewhat out of joint, as the saying is.

I found my father with my mother; he was sitting by her bedside, and he laughed at the serious face which I brought into the room. I doubt not he comprehended something of my feeling just then.

"So you have come to see your sister Elisabeth, Dick?" he said, resting a hand on my shoulder.

"Yes, sir," I said, striving hard to look cheerful, for Meg had dwelt upon the fact that some little show of enthusiasm would be expected of me, though I fear I made a lamentable failure of it now that I was put to the test.

Indeed, the last four and twenty hours must have been wholly tragic but for the advent of the strangers, which had given me something to think of beside my private griefs.

"Well, kiss your mother, Dick, and wish her joy, and then you shall be rewarded," said my father.

I needed no urging, but was both willing and anxious to kiss my mother, and the pressure of her arms about me was vastly comforting. I remembered as she held me close that I had not seen her in two whole days; a privation the like of which I had possibly never before known in all my short life.

"Dick, it's the dearest babe!" she whispered, releasing me.

And then Meg, in something of a needless flutter, as it seemed to me, and with a deprecatory "May I, ma'am?" drew aside the blanket, and there on the bed beside my mother I saw not one, but two babes.

"Why, there are two of them!" I cried, drawing back in dismay.

"Yes," said my mother gently. "The one with the darker skin belongs to the poor lady who came last night."

"Why don't she keep it, then?" I asked with such a show of mingled dismay and anger that my father laughed aloud.

I thought they were all wonderfully foolish, since it was quite manifest to me that there must be some cruel trick afoot to fasten this intruder upon us.

"The lady is very sick," explained my father. "Luckily your mother is able to care for this little one, or God knows what would happen to it."

But I looked upon the two small bundles of pink flesh with anything but a friendly eye; one would be bad enough, but the two would be a calamity.

"To be sure, its mother will want it back," said Meg. "Lord love us, but they are sweet to look on!" she added.

And it was quite clear to me that she took a most unseemly interest in the new arrivals.

This saddened me inexpressibly. I felt the whole world—which was my mother, my father, and Meg—had suddenly grown cold to me, and what had I done to merit it? I was just the same as I had ever been; my faults, such as they were, were no more flagrant than formerly, and yet that warm May day was turning very drear, the brightness was going out of it, and I attributed this change to the two little maids who had come most treacherously when I was not prepared to defend my rights, my hitherto undisputed supremacy.

Not wishing to appear uncivil, however, and being resolved to hide my griefs behind a manful front, I remained in my mother's room a little time longer, and was on the point of going downstairs with Meg when, just as we quitted the room, there ran into the hall the strange lady's black-browed woman. Her hair was in disorder about her head and she was beating her breast with her clenched hands and crying aloud, though what she said we could not know; but as we stood gazing at her in astonishment, the French gentleman came running up the stairs and at his heels was Captain Maxwell, the face of each white as death itself.

Captain Maxwell seized the woman by the arm, and,

shaking her roughly, bade her hold her peace, no doubt forgetting in his excitement that she understood nothing of what he was saying, since he spoke in English. There was something horrible in this sudden uproar in that silent house, but the woman appeared to have lost all control of herself; she regarded neither Captain Maxwell nor the French gentleman. With her clenched hands she continued to beat her breast and cry out. This lasted for a moment, and then the surgeon came from the lady's room. I heard Captain Maxwell say to the woman:

"Hold you tongue, you jade! What will your mistress think?"

To which the surgeon, pausing there in the doorway, responded gravely:

"Her mistress will think nothing, sir; for she is dead."

Instantly Captain Maxwell dropped the woman's arm and fell back a step.

"I feared it might be that!" he muttered huskily, speaking as if to himself.

Ere this, my father had appeared. He now ordered Meg to take me downstairs, and with the surgeon and the others went into the chamber where the lady lay as though asleep, as he told me later, with no trace of suffering on her face, but wonderfully beautiful with the shadow of a sweet, wistful smile on her lips. The serving woman did not re-enter the room then, but stood there in the hall by the door, sobbing aloud, which was pitiful enough to hear, for I could but think of the terrible isolation of her grief since she could speak of it with neither my mother nor Meg.

The French gentleman and Captain Maxwell very shortly came from the chamber and shut themselves up in my father's study; and some little while afterward as I

was passing under the window I heard the Captain say, speaking in English:

"All the same, the wish that the child should be born in Scotland was the maddest folly! And after all, the child's a girl."

As I had no high opinion of girls myself, I thought the better of him for this.

In my father's journal, which is before me as I write, there is orderly set down among a mass of other matters such as weddings, christenings, and the like, this brief entry: "This day, the 20th of May, 1590, there was buried Madame Barras, the French lady," that being the sum total of his knowledge; and thus I suppose it stands to this hour, on the slab of grey stone that marks the spot where the French lady lies, far distant from her brighter France, under the leaden skies of our north country, and in the very shadow of the Pennine hills.

I can still recall the separate events of that day when she was laid to rest. From our vicarage she was borne down the lane, four stout fellows whom my father had got for the purpose carrying the rude coffin the village joiner had made. From the lane the little procession moved out across the meadow where the Roman well is, to the church. After my father walked Captain Maxwell and the French gentleman, then came their servants and hers; and last of all our Meg, to whose hand I held fast for the very comfort to be had from that living contact.

We entered the church and found there, waiting us, a small gathering of shy rustics from the fell farms, and half a score of villagers. It was already late afternoon, the long afternoon of our north country, and as we came from the church into the walled-in acre where the dead and gone of past generations slept, we could hear the bleat of lambs from distant fields, and the cawing of the rooks in

the old beeches about the grey stone vicarage. My father read the burial service, and then, as the peaty sods fell with a hollow sound, we turned away. It was over; but the stranger's youth and beauty, to which was speedily added rank and riches, became a tradition in those parts that furnished discussion and conjecture for many a winter's evening long after.

CHAPTER FOUR

I WAS present at the interview my father had with Captain Maxwell after our return from the church. It took place in his study, whither the two gentlemen had followed him. As they paused on the threshold, my father, rising and disposing of me who had been sitting on his knee, bade them enter. They did so, the French gentleman dropping into a chair by the door, while Captain Maxwell strode to the hearth and, resting an elbow on the chimney piece, faced my father.

"We are deeply indebted to you, sir," he said. He glanced about the room, seeming to note its barrenness, its few books, and worn furniture, and added: "I take it, sir, that this parish yields but a poor living." It would have required a bolder man than my father to deny the truth of this. "I tell you, sir," said our guest with sudden candour, "my kinswoman's death leaves us sadly hipped!"

"Poor lady!" said my father.

The Captain's face clouded; he made an impatient gesture.

"Don't, I beg of you, sir!" he said curtly.

There was a moment's silence in the room; it was broken by my father.

"What of the babe, sir?" he asked.

"It was the babe that I had in mind. Except for myself, Madame Barras had neither kith nor kin this side of France. I can tell you this much, sir, and no more. The lady was a person of rank—high rank, and her

death was a cruel, grievous thing!" He spoke with keen emotion, but controlled himself immediately. "It behooves us to go back over the road we have just come. We must not longer intrude upon your hospitality."

"And the babe?" asked my father gently, for he was always tender of the young.

"I make bold,"—and again Captain Maxwell glanced about the room—"I make bold to suggest that the child remain here in the care of your good wife, sir. Nay," he added quickly, for my father was about to speak, "you shall be properly recompensed; if I could not offer this I would not venture such a proposal. The child may be with you for some months—perhaps a year, and for this year we will put down ten pounds. If by any chance the child should be left with you a second year, another ten pounds shall be forthcoming. What do you say, sir?"

"I must speak with my wife; for, after all, the bargain will be hers rather than mine," said my father.

"A moment, sir," said Captain Maxwell, very civilly detaining him as he was about to quit the room. "I felt constrained to offer you money, but I wish to appeal to your kindness as well; consider the jeopardy in which the child will be placed did we attempt to remove it hence to London at his time—pray speak of this to your wife."

To which my father assented as he left the room. I hoped that he would refuse to care for the babe, but he did not refuse, and it was the appeal to his pity that won the day. He was with my mother not above ten minutes.

"Well?" said Captain Maxwell anxiously, as he re-entered the room.

"My wife is well content to have the child stay," answered my father simply.

"My compliments to the lady!" cried Captain Maxwell, and he looked mightily relieved. "My compliments

to the lady!" he repeated. "And now these——" He drew forth a well-filled purse and handed it to my father, who took it ruefully enough, for it was a grievous thing for him, a gentleman, to have to do, and yet it could not be otherwise. Our guest seemed to understand his feeling, for he rested a hand on his shoulder whilst he said:

"Cheer up, man! Your pride does you credit, but you cannot live by pride—I am leaving you something better; and had I given you thrice the sum I have, I should still hold myself your debtor. Ere we drop this matter entirely, there is one thing more I would say; within the month I shall wish to hear of the child's progress, and the state of its health." He seemed to consider for a moment. "My movements will be somewhat uncertain in the near future, so despatch the letter to me in care of Robert Selwyn, of the Middle Temple, London. Can you remember, sir?"

"I shall not forget, and presently shall make note of it," said my father.

"One thing more, sir," said the Captain. "I wish Madame Barras' grave to be fittingly marked; can you undertake this commission?"

"How is the child to be known?" asked my father.

"By her mother's name, Mary. Let her be so christened," said Captain Maxwell. "And, sir, by your leave, I would see that the record of the child's birth, and Madame Barras' death, is properly set down in the parish books."

These and some other matters were settled with my father that very night, and just at break of day on the morning following the Captain, the French gentleman, and their servants left for the south. For this I had planned to be awake, but overslept myself, and was only roused by hearing the beat of hoofs on the cart-way that led to the back of the house and the stable. I sprang from

my bed and running to the window was in time to see the great coach, which now held only the black-browed serving woman, roll out upon the high-road. It was preceded by the two mounted gentlemen. In the early light I saw coach and horsemen pass down the road, up the gentle slope of the hill beyond, and so out upon the moor.

A twelvemonth slipped around and the babe was still with us; nor had my father heard from Captain Maxwell in some little while, and Meg began to discuss the matter with me privately. She was quite sure we were not likely to hear again from the Captain, and that my father's famous bargain with that gentleman was turning out not one whit differently from what she had all along said it would turn out. Our Meg, by the way, like many another prophet of even greater repute, demanded much of one's memory. By this time, however, I had so far changed in my opinion concerning babes that I pointed out to her that although it was quite true Captain Maxwell had not appeared to discharge his fresh debt to my father, the one great advantage remained with us—we had the babe. Meg could not gainsay this, but she had not lived so close to the Scots for nothing; and while she loved the child as much as did anyone in the house, excepting only my mother herself, yet the fact that a second ten pounds had not been paid over was a sore point with her, and she was inclined to censure my father as a poor man of business.

It was the fourteenth month, I think, when one day there rode up to our door a tall gentleman, very plainly dressed, and attended by a single servant. This was Master Selwyn, Captain Maxwell's agent. It was Meg who hunted me out to tell me of the stranger, and it was Meg, abandoning her former convictions, who gave it as her opinion that he had come for Mary.

"Eh, Dicky, but it's going to be a sorry day for the mistress when she has to part with the little one!" she cried.

"But how can the gentleman take Mary—you say he has only a man servant with him?"

"How do you know who's left in the village?" Meg demanded, and at this I own a sudden faintness overcame me. "One might have known how it would turn out! Eh, do you think your father will have backbone to stick for a second ten pounds?"

So intense was the state of excitement into which Meg and I had fallen that Meg deemed it honourable under the circumstances to stand with her ear to a crack in the parlour door. After a moment of diligent listening she announced to me in a whisper that Mary was to remain with us for at least another year, and that the stranger was paying into my father's hands at that very moment the sum of ten pounds.

As nearly as I can remember, some twenty months now slipped around, in all of which time my father heard naught of Mary's friends; and then came Captain Maxwell himself, not greatly changed, that I could discern. He arrived about mid-morning one dull day in early spring to spend but a few hours at the vicarage, and then continued on his way over the fells, going toward Carlisle.

He professed himself as delighted with Mary's growth and appearance of health, and when he left it was understood she was to remain with us some little time longer; but whether this meant months or years, my mother durst not ask, for very dread that some limit would be placed on her possession of the child.

She might have saved herself this fear, however, for thrice again we were destined to see Master Robert Sel-

wyn; these visits extending over a space of five years, by which time Mary and my sister were well grown toward girlhood.

Meanwhile it had been decided that I should be sent away to school, my education having become something of a burden to my father, who was not fitted to cope with an unruly lad who desired other things than learning. Indeed, my apathy had been so great that with all my love for my father I had been coaxed but the shortest distance into the mysteries of Latin and Greek, and even read and wrote my own native English indifferently well for a boy of my age.

Now, my father's only brother, the Reverend Philip Farraday, was living at Alford, in the County of Lincoln, whither he had gone to be master of a recently founded free school. Not only my education, but a yet weightier question was to be referred to him. He was to discern my inclination in life, which my father wished might be toward the church.

It is not my purpose to describe my schooldays. My Uncle Philip was undoubtedly an excellent master, having a most orthodox dependence on the birch, by aid of which he would fain have coerced me into the paths of learning; but I must do him the justice to say he invariably prefaced his floggings by the declaration that they hurt me not one whit more than they did him, and so even when I was sorest I was bound to admit that it was mighty generous of him to take the interest in me which he did, though out of pure charity I could have wished him less ready to make sacrifice of his feelings. I was nearing the end of my fourth year at Alford when there chanced what I still count the most notable occurrence of my stay in Lincolnshire. It was on a Sunday afternoon in early summer, and I had gone forth for a walk in the woods over beyond the

village of Willoughby, which is a matter of three miles or so from Alford.

I had come into a wooded pasture through which there flowed a small brook, and hard by this brook was the strangest hut I had ever seen. It was newly erected, as I judged by its appearance, out of the boughs of trees, which were neatly wattled to form its four sides, while other boughs roofed it in.

My first notion was that some shepherd or forester had built this shelter for his temporary use, and seeing no one about I went closer to examine it. On the turf before the opening that served as a door was a heap of ashes where a fire had recently been kindled; near at hand was a store of faggots, together with a pot and some other cooking utensils, all very neatly arranged, as if just cleaned and put aside. But the hut itself was empty, as I saw when I paused in the doorway, if one might so call the opening which did away with the need of either doors or windows. It was furnished with a rude table of boards, there was also a stool, and in one corner a bed of dry leaves. In another corner were some pieces of armour, an axe, a sword, and a musket; but what I counted most odd were two books which were lying on the table. I took the liberty to glance at them; one was Machiavelli's "Art of War," and the other "The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius."

I got no further in my observations than this, for I heard the beat of hoofs on the sward without, and as I came quickly from the hut I saw galloping toward me a man mounted on a big grey horse. He was armed with a long lance, which was levelled, for though I had not observed it before, there was hanging an iron tilting ring from the limb of an oak that stood close at hand. This ring the horseman struck deftly enough, so that I could not forbear to cry out:

"Bravo! Well hit!"

Instantly the horseman drew rein and turned on me a cheerful, ruddy face, for he had not been aware of my presence until I spoke. He was in shirt and breeches, and bare headed, but wore a splendid pair of jack-boots; for the rest, he was a young fellow not many years older than myself, but bronzed and muscular, sitting his horse with easy confidence.

"Well hit!" I repeated, being somewhat assured by the stranger's youth.

On his part, he seemed well pleased with my admiration of his skill. He swung himself from his horse with a mighty jingling of spurs, and strode toward me.

"Where do you come from?" he asked.

"From Alford," I said.

"Do you live there?" he questioned, favouring me with a closer scrutiny.

"I am entered in the school there, of which my Uncle Philip is master."

"So you are Philip Farraday's nephew, then?" he said.

"Yes; do you know him?" I asked, at which my new acquaintance laughed.

"Every spot of me where a birch stick or a ferule may reach knows him!" and he continued to laugh as if the very memory were a pleasant one.

I was vastly taken with him; he was such a handsome, sturdy fellow.

"So, Master Farraday, you like my tilting?" he asked abruptly.

"Yes, it is well done, if that was a sample of it," I said.

"And my riding, Master Farraday?"

He seemed really desirous of my criticism, and I was able to tell him quite honestly that I observed he sat his

horse as if he were a part of it; at which he gave me a friendly smile, and I could see that I was making my way into his regard.

"Do you know aught of horsemanship?" he asked.

"I come from Westmoreland, where we have good horses, if small, and good men to sit them," I answered, but not boastfully. However, my mention of Westmoreland won his attention at once.

"Come, have you ever seen a Scottish raid, or taken hand in one," he demanded.

"No," I said. I added: "I have been fortunate in that respect."

"Fortunate!" he cried quickly. "Do you call that fortunate? Lord, sir, I had thought better of you!" And I could see I had fallen in his good opinion; but I muttered something about it being one thing to live in Lincolnshire and gossip of Scottish raids, and another to live in Westmoreland and experience them; at which my new acquaintance favoured me with a superior smile, as I thought it. He now strode toward the hut.

"Come, Master Farraday, we'll have a mug of small beer together to our better understanding," he said; and nothing loath, I followed him into the hut.

"What do you think of my bower?" he asked, but he did not wait for my reply. "I have for the time being withdrawn from the world, having had a surfeit of too much company. I devote my time to study and to the practice of martial sports."

He had brought forth a pitcher of beer and two mugs while he was speaking, and he now very courteously begged me to be seated. So I took the stool, while he sat himself down upon a corner of the table.

"Do you belong in these parts?" I asked of this militant hermit, for I had guessed that it would be agreeable

to him to talk of himself, in which judgment I was not far wrong.

"I was born in Willoughby, and I was sent to school at Alford, having had your excellent uncle for my master; and many's the flogging I got from him. Later I was entered at the grammar school at Louth. It has sent forth many a fair scholar, but I am not one of that goodly company. I had, ere this, made up my mind to run away to sea, but on my father's death, I being only about thirteen years old, one of my guardians took me in hand, together with a little store of money that had been left me: the latter with so tight a hold that I have to this day seen only shillings where I should have looked on pounds."

But he seemed cheerful, I thought, in spite of his losses. My face must have told him something of what was in my mind, for he said:

"After all, it was no great matter, and my heart was set on brave adventures."

"Why did you desire to go to sea?" I asked.

"Why did I desire to go to sea?" he repeated. "To fight Jack Spaniard, Master Farraday, for the greater glory of God, and mine own credit and advancement!"

He took a long pull at his mug.

"But my guardians thought otherwise," he continued, "and I was apprenticed to a great merchant in Lynn, from whom I presently ran away."

All this while my eyes were opening wider and wider, until they got to be like saucers. I had learned much of the duty of the young, but apparently it was a subject about which my new acquaintance never bothered his head. Secretly I doubted not he was destined to some bad end, but I wished to hear how it was that he chanced to be living a hermit's life when he had so greatly desired brave adventures.

"You have never wished to go to sea, Master Faraday?" he asked; and in all honesty I was forced to confess that I was bothered by no such troublesome craving, also that I was disposed to let those in authority over me order my life according to their greater experience. He heard me out rather impatiently, I thought, for he was somewhat hasty and choleric, and more of a talker than a listener.

"Well, I suppose there be some of us must stay in the nest, just as there be some of us must look abroad for the life they would lead," he observed.

"But what befell you after you ran away?" I asked.

"I ran not very far afield that time, but back to my native Willoughby, where I was given a place as a sort of page in the service of Lord Willoughby d'Eresby's son, whom they were sending abroad to join his brother in France. My guardians to be rid of me paid into my hands the sum of ten shillings, and that's all I have had out of them."

I could have believed that my new friend's guardians might have counted themselves lucky to be rid of him even had it cost ten times the sum he named. I also began to fear that he was drawing the long bow, as the saying is, for my benefit.

Perched on the corner of the table, he swung his booted legs and drank his beer, appearing to be but too well satisfied with himself; yet in spite of my doubts I was much taken with him, for surely he was showing great condescension in talking thus freely to me, who was his junior.

"With all my love for it, the sea made rough play for us when we set sail from Dover, and more than once I thought we should surely go to the bottom; but in the end we sailed into the harbour at Calais, whence we went

on to Orleans, where the tutor of my young patron speedily decided that I should be sent back to England." My new friend chuckled softly. "I was treated handsomely enough, however, and with good clothes on my back and money jingling in my pocket, I determined I would see something of the world before I again set foot on English soil."

He paused in his narrative to toss off what remained of his mug of beer.

"What next did you do?" I asked, for now my fear was that he might stop with his story unfinished, which I conceived would be a great calamity, since never before in my life had I held such intimate talk with one who had travelled in France and seen the world.

"I went on to Paris, Master Farraday, where I met with a pleasant Scottish gentleman who was so obliging as to borrow the most of my money from me, which I was gull enough to lend him, and by the time I got to Rouen, where I presently went, I had not money sufficient to take me to England, had I wished to go there. So I made my way as best I could to Havre de Grace, where I fell in with certain English troops that were serving under Sir John Norris. Here was my chance! And I lost no time in turning soldier, about which there was no difficulty, for I was a lusty lad, well grown, and strong enough to handle a pike. I saw no fighting in France; but when, after a little time, Sir John Norris was recalled, I, with some others, remained behind for service in the Low Countries against the Spaniards. To that end I joined Captain Joseph Duxbury's company, and remained with his colours four years. We were a motley crew—English pikemen, Germans, and Switzers—and among them all I learned to take care of my own skin."

Here he paused, having summed up those four years

in a word, but I thought him too modest by half, and indeed such was the art in his very reserve that I knew full well there was a deal more he could tell me had he the mind; so I begged him to continue, whereupon he reached across and clapped me familiarly on the shoulder.

"I own I have had a hand in one or two trifling adventures, Master Farraday, but nothing to brag on," he said.

Yet such was his condescension, he showed me a mighty fine Toledo, which he told me he had taken from a Spanish captain.

"I basted him well, and laid him by the heels," he added, with a relish.

He generously permitted me to handle this famous weapon, showing me how to make certain parries with it, for we had now gone forth under the trees. Next he showed me his harness, all dented and defaced, but for each rude marking he had some thrilling tale to tell of battle or assault or private encounter. One might see that it went hard with him to carry out his assumption of modesty, since he dearly loved a good listener, and I paid him the compliment of being all eyes and ears, for I could only think of Davis, Drake, Frobisher, and Raleigh, and other doughty English heroes, being sure that here was another of that sturdy breed in the very making.

"And when you quit here, where will you go?" I asked.

"Either to take service against the Spaniards or the Turks, and after all, though the Spaniards are villains to the last man, as we English know full well, I had as lief it were the Turks; since I had rather cut heathen throats than Christian."

Which I thought showed a most noble spirit on his part, and how far above all petty spite or littleness he was.

But the afternoon was waning, and with no little reluctance I quitted his side.

"Eh, must go? Then present my compliments to your uncle."

"Who shall I say sends them?" I asked.

"John Smith—he'll not have forgotten me."

CHAPTER FIVE,

I WOULD gladly have had it otherwise, but I saw no more of John Smith; for though I made use of the first chance that offered to go again to the woods where he had built his hut, I found it deserted, the winds had even scattered the ashes of his fire so that only a blackened circle on the ground remained to show where he had kindled it. As for John Smith himself, he had wholly disappeared from the neighbourhood, as I learned upon inquiry in Willoughby; but whither he had gone no one could say, yet they told me he had made a mighty stir in those parts, so that every urchin in the village was playing at war in the Low Countries, taking turns who should be John Smith, and who should be laid by the heels by that champion. Long afterward in thinking of him—and he was not one to forget—I wondered how he fared on his quest for brave adventures; and I preserved my memory of him as with his lance at rest he rode at the rings, preparing, like the sober, sensible fellow he was, for the life he had chosen to live.

As it fell out, that was my last year at Alford, for owing to a wholly unexpected event, those plans that had been made for me all underwent a sudden change. My mother, by the death of her uncle, a rich merchant of Bristol, came into a handsome legacy. With it had been purchased a small estate in the north, to which my father expected presently to retire; here, too, I was to be set up on my own acres, with a gentleman's portion. When I got this news life opened up very fair before me, since I could

conceive of nothing more fully in accord with my tastes and desires. My Uncle Philip was the first to congratulate me, which he did in characteristic fashion.

"It relieves me of a heavy burden, Dick," said he, with a slow, cynical smile; "and when you think of all the learning you will not have to master, I trust you will not fail to be properly grateful; and, in your pride, don't forget there is still in the family a poor but honest parson, whose Very Reverend Father in God evinces no desire to advance him to a better living."

In September of that year I set forth on my home-going, and as the miles grew behind me my spirits mounted into a kind of ecstasy. I quitted the great plain of York, and the hills rolled up before me, ever sweeping higher and higher, the way constantly growing wilder and more rugged as I advanced, until at last I saw the summits of the Pennines, veiled and misted, fringing the sky.

Following the great road which leads over the pass of Stainmore to Carlisle and the west of Scotland, I crossed into Westmoreland and was at my journey's end. It was nightfall when I rode up to my father's door, and the years I had been away seemed to drop from me—it was like yesterday. They had been looking forward to my coming all that afternoon, and my hullo was instantly heard. I scarce knew how it was done, but in a twinkling I had left my horse, my father was patting me on the back, and my mother's arms were about me, while deep down in my heart I felt the joy of my homecoming.

When I had time to take them all in, I was astonished to see how the girls had grown; Mary, in particular, giving promise of the great beauty that was to be hers, while Betty, with her blond prettiness, formed a striking contrast to her foster-sister; but the pair of them were sweet to look at, as I presently told them, for I was reaching an

age where one might reasonably be supposed to have an opinion on so important a matter as female beauty.

We were so full of the estate my mother's legacy had gone to purchase that we could talk of nothing else that night, and the next day after breakfast my father took me to have a look at it. Together we explored every field. I was vastly impressed, and wonderfully set up with the idea of possession, as I had a right to be; while my father, rubbing his hands as was his wont when in a good humour, told me how he had planned to build over the house that it might be more comfortable for my mother. The place was still in the occupancy of a tenant whose lease had yet a year to run, and it seemed hard to me that we should have to wait so long a time before we could move to our own land.

As we walked home I asked my father what he heard from Captain Maxwell.

"Why, nothing much, Dick, to say the truth; but he does not forget that Mary's here—I could wish he might, for it would break your mother's heart to have to part with the child."

"When did you last have word from him?" I asked.

"Some months ago. It's all a pretty mystery! Who was Madame Barras,—that is a question I have speculated on much; and, for the matter of that, who is Captain Maxwell? I sometimes question if he is in any way related to Mary. Still, we cannot doubt but her welfare is of importance to him. To tell you the truth, Dick, I am not too well satisfied with the situation, for how do we know but she is greatly injured by being hidden away here; that someone else, say Captain Maxwell himself, is not enjoying what should be hers? I trust I am not one to set too high a value on mere worldly fortune, but worse things may happen to a maid than riches and rank."

'And, indeed, he was a most unworldly minded man, though he could talk with a fine show of practicality when the mood was on him.

I know not just how it came about, nor can I say either when the time was, but gradually just one fear grew up in my heart, and this fear was that Mary would be taken from us. At first I told myself that were it Betty who stood in Mary's place my feelings would be in all respects the same, but after a while I knew that this was not so. As I began to comprehend the menace of the situation I endeavoured to comfort myself with the thought that her friends must ere long forget the very fact of her existence. I sought also to reason myself into the belief that had they any intention of removing her from my father's charge they would have done so while she was yet a child; and as I grew toward manhood I found it desirable to cherish this conviction for the hope to be got from it.

Even to myself I was slow to admit the growth of this feeling into love. It seemed such presumption on my part, for she was so far above me in goodness and purity. It was my father who first divined my secret, as I was to know. when one day he called me into his study to go over certain accounts, for he delighted to keep an exact record of all the transactions on the farm; but when we had finished with our business and I had risen to leave him, he detained me.

"I'd talk with you, Dick—so sit down, lad," he said, motioning me to my chair again.

The expression on his face had become grave all at once, and I fell to cudgelling my brain wondering what I had done that was amiss, for I was sometimes out of bounds.

"It's a serious matter I have in mind, Dick," he began,

"and I want you to hear me out with patience for your own sake."

Somehow my mind fastened on the true reason for his sudden gravity, and I could feel the colour come into my face.

"I am thinking about Mary, Dick," he continued.

"Yes?" I said.

"It seems to me that we must take a peculiar care of her, for she has uncommon beauty, and there are young fellows about here who will not be long in finding it out. After all, though I know nothing of him, either for good or ill, I yet owe compliance to what I would conceive to be Captain Maxwell's wishes in all matters affecting her. I feel toward Mary as my own child; still, we must not forget that her being here has rested from the first on another foundation than affection. Now, I could wish it were not so." He sighed gently. "This brings me around to what I would say to you, Dick. In all honour and fairness it must be our duty to see to it that she forms no foolish ties while under our roof; for how can we foretell what unhappiness it may bring to her? For aught we know, she may be much above us all in station, and Captain Maxwell may already have her disposal in marriage under consideration. So honour demands that we protect her from any error which can only bring sorrow to her in the end."

He glanced across at me. His words were bringing me to the verge of despair; and what he said, my heart denied. What was Captain Maxwell to us?

"You see it as I see it, Dick?" he said, after a moment's pause; but still I was silent. He waited for me to answer him, but I could not trust myself to speak. "She could never marry from under my roof unless the match had Captain Maxwell's approval. Look well where you be-

stow your heart, Dick, your happiness is very dear to me!"

His speech was grave and kind; I could not but be moved by it, and I would have given much to be able to tell him that his warning came too late, but I clung to my dogged silence as to a refuge. He quitted his chair and came and stood close at my side, with his hand resting on my shoulder.

"Is all confidence dead between us, lad?" he asked gently.

"No," I said. "No, no, father—not that——"

"Dick, you care about the maid?"

I nodded; that was the only answer I could give him.

"From my heart I pity you, Dick, for I dare not think that it can ever be."

"Why?" I asked.

"For the reasons I have given," he said; and I burst out with:

"How do you know Captain Maxwell will not be glad to have her so disposed of? Do his actions show that he has any plans for her beyond keeping her hidden away here? After all, she will either care for me, or not—as the case may be."

"But you have not spoken to her, Dick?"

"No," I said.

"Thank God for that! You must think of her as you think of Betty——"

"I can't!"

"Oh, Dick—Dick!" he said regretfully. "I blame myself that I did not speak of this matter to you sooner!"

"To what end?" I asked.

"To the end that you might have put all thought of her from you——"

"Even if I had striven to do that the result would

have been the same. Who cares for her as I care for her?" I cried.

"That is not the question, Dick," said my father patiently.

"It's much the question to me!" I flamed out.

"No, Dick, you will do what is honourable, no matter what the sting is. You will not speak of your love for Mary, because you cannot in justice to her. You care something for her happiness as well as your own."

Direct opposition I might have stood out against, but my father was both gentle and reasonable, the last I knew only too well; and the weight of what he said bore in upon me in spite of myself, for after all I would not have him think my love utterly selfish.

"I'll not speak to her now, but I can promise you no more than that," I said unwillingly.

"'Tis all I desire you to promise me, Dick," said my father.

I got to my feet, and again he rested his hand on my shoulder.

"Does it mean so much to you?" he asked.

"God help me; it means everything!" I answered, as I went from the room.

CHAPTER SIX

I WAS resolved to keep the promise I had made my father, and I avoided Mary as much as I could. Perhaps I did this in part with the hope that she would observe the change in me and demand I tell her the reason of it. God knows I passed through all the many gradations of despair; becoming moody and silent, spending whole days together far out on the fells with the shepherds. My poor mother, who was not in the secret, was sure some insidious complaint had laid hold on me, and begged me to see the surgeon; whilst Betty, guessing some part of the truth, vowed that if I but took to writing verse she would consider it indisputable evidence that I was in love.

I might explain that there was a young gentleman in the neighbourhood of most excellent family and prospects who was paying court to Betty herself. He had taken to verse as a relief from his disorder, and it had been my privilege to hear much of what this silly moon-struck fellow had written, every line of which spoke of a desolating melancholy, for our Betty was as uncertain in her humours as a spring day. I own it put me in something of a huff that she should profess to see even an outward semblance in the feeling I was manfully endeavouring to hide, and what I was pleased to consider Mr. Thomas Preston's puppy love, but I wisely forbore to say so.

There was to come a time, it is true, when I should realise there had been not a little selfishness in the form I permitted my despair to take; not that my love was

ever to be less to me, but I was to understand from the very force of my augmented suffering how much happiness I was then knowing, when life had seemed crowded with bitterness for me. My father all this while treated me with a grave and studied kindness, though he seldom spoke of Mary to me, and of my love for her not at all.

I say I had meant to keep the promise I had made him, and for above a month I stuck doggedly to this resolution, having a kind of savage pride in my martyrdom, as I viewed it, and then all in a moment my pledged word and my fine resolutions were forgotten and counted for naught.

I had come upon Mary in the garden where she was working among the flowers; I stood watching her without speech for a little time, and then sat down on the turf beside her as she was fastening the roses against the garden wall. I continued to watch her in silence, observing the deft use she made of her white taper fingers. She was dressed like any farmer's daughter in our part of the world, and her head had no covering save her own abundant hair, which where it rested against her clear white skin had a look that was almost blue black, so dark did it seem by contrast. She had kept on with her task as if unaware of my presence, and now without looking at me, said:

"Dick, I have wanted to speak with you."

"Yes?"

"I want you to answer me one question," she said.

"A hundred if you like!"

"No, just the one, Dick; a hundred might take me too far into your confidences. I fear I have unknowingly offended you, but it would have been the part of friendship to have told me my fault!"

Her fingers had been very busy with their work all this

while, and she had rather avoided meeting my glance, but now she turned toward me, and there was no mistaking the look on her face; it was one of real concern.

"Put that notion away, you have not offended me—you could not, Mary!" I muttered huskily. Much more rushed to my lips, though I kept it back. But her eyes did not lose their troubled look; uncertainly, questioningly, she gazed at me.

"But you avoid me, Dick. You scarce have a word to say to me."

"It is only your fancy."

"It is much more than my fancy," she insisted. "You plainly show that you no longer desire my friendship."

I was silent, for I could think of no answer to this, since I had avoided her.

"When I come into the room you quit it, you no longer walk with me, or ride, or talk with me—even Betty has remarked it. Why, Dick, what is wrong with you?"

She spoke with gentle reproach, while her great dark eyes, which were usually so serene in their expression, carried a hurt look. We were silent again. From high overhead in the blue arch came the song of a lark. Nearer us, the bursting buds gave mute expression to the joy of life.

"Do you ever think of the future?" I presently asked. "Have you ever thought that a day might come when you will leave us?"

"Leave—leave here?" Her eyes grew wide on the instant.

"Yes."

She looked at me as if not comprehending, and then the colour gradually died out of her cheeks and left her very pale indeed.

"Leave Dane's Hill farm?" she repeated almost in a

whisper. "Leave your mother and father who have been my mother and father too for all these years—and dear Betty—and you—Dick!" She paused, and her lips were trembling.

"Your friends——" I began.

"I have no friends but those I have named!" she cried quickly.

"I was thinking of Captain Maxwell."

"Why, I hardly know him at all, I'd not call him a friend!"

"Your kinsman, then."

"I don't even know the degree, and he thinks of me not oftener than once in every two or three years!"

"Suppose, however," I began desperately, "that he should take it into his head to remove you from here."

"Oh, he will never do that, I am sure—sure, Dick!"

"I am not," I said.

"But what could he do with me, a troublesome girl?" she urged.

"But it might mean so much to you, Mary. Summer and winter it is all the same here——"

"But if one is happy—that is, I was until you changed toward me. Because of that, I could think of nothing else; wondering what it was that I had done, Dick."

"You have done nothing. It's not that I like you less—God help me, it is that I like you more, but it's not for me to say——" I cried.

She looked at me, at first not quite comprehending, and then slowly the rich blood began to mount into her face. Some part of my meaning, at least, was plain to her. I had quite forgotten my promise to my father, I felt only the mighty impulse of my love that was urging me on to speak. I had risen and stood at her side.

"I care too much for you, Mary, and I have avoided

you, not because I wished not to be near you, but because it was too perilous a joy I got from it!"

Once she had made as if to stop me, and now she was looking at me with startled eyes.

"I love you, sweetheart—is not that plain to you?"

"Please, Dick—don't——"

For I had seized her hands in mine and was covering them with kisses.

"No, no, tell me—tell me, dear, do you care for me?"

"Why, I have loved you always——"

"I'm not asking for that kind of love, it will no longer do!"

Slowly I had drawn her toward me, and what at first had been only a look of wonder and alarm was changing swiftly; a new light was stealing into her eyes, the colour was coming and going on her face, I could feel her hands, now hot and now cold, flutter in my eager grasp, her pulse throb increasingly, and could know that something was being roused in her, the very possibility of which she had never been aware of before, an undreamed-of world upon which she was looking for the first time; further I could know that it was a summer world, all of fairness and light and life!

For a moment she struggled to withdraw her hands from mine, half turning from me in her embarrassment, which was charming to behold, and then her eyes came back to mine and for a long, sweet moment I looked deep into their pure clear depths. Then all in an instant she uttered a soft little cry of tenderness and hid her face on my arm, and at that close contact my blood leaped in a swift sweet ecstasy, new and perfect, and like nothing I had ever known before, but a thing apart. I drew her closer still; my promises, my father's words—all was forgotten!

"I love you so, dear heart!" I said. About us the summer winds rustled the leaves, and high overhead the lark sang on and on. "I love you so!" I repeated, drunk with the joy of that moment.

"And yet you made as if you were angry with me, Dick—I could have wept because of it!"

"There will be no more tears then!" I said.

There was a quick step on the path, and turning I found myself confronted by my father. Never had I seen his glance so stern, and never had I felt myself so far in the wrong nor so illy prepared to meet his anger. Mary gave a little cry of dismay and fled into the house.

"So, Dick," said my father after a moment's silence, "this is the way you keep your word."

"No, I have not kept it," I answered him.

"She—but I don't need to ask you—I saw and heard enough."

"She loves me as I love her," I said.

"And much happiness it may bring you both!" he said bitterly.

"We have known some happiness that cannot be taken from us, at any rate," I said.

"Dick, Dick, how could you!" and his return to his customary gentleness instantly disarmed me. The face I turned toward him must have worn such a look of wretchedness as to earn me something of his pity, for he said:

"My poor Dick, what infinite folly is yours——"

"You will say nothing harsh to Mary!" I begged.

"No, Dick, it is you who are to blame. This complicates matters wonderfully; all I can do is to write Captain Maxwell that my foolish boy has fallen in love with his kinswoman——"

"Not that, please, father!" I cried.

"And why not, sir?" and his look changed again, and

I could see that he was on the verge of one of his rare bursts of temper. "I'll give you leisure in which to consider what an honourable man would do," he said as he quitted me, going toward the house. Perhaps he felt that he durst not discuss the matter with me just then lest his anger should completely overmaster him.

I went from the garden out across the fields toward the common. I wished to see no one yet awhile, for my joy was too perfect a thing to be broken in upon. At last, far out upon the fells, I threw myself down on the ground. I felt no doubt of the future. What had I to fear! There was only the sting of my father's hot words to disturb me; yet in the end I doubted not I could make him understand that I had honestly desired to keep my promise to him, it was only——

An hour later, and I was going homeward. I had come into the field back of our garden when I saw my father advancing toward me.

"I have been looking for you everywhere, Dick," he said as I came up with him, and he rested his hand on my shoulder with a kindly pressure which I took to be in token of his forgiveness, so that I said contritely enough:

"I am sorry, father." But he did not regard my words, he merely said:

"I have sad news for you, Dick." And the expression of his face deepened in its gravity.

"What is it?" I asked, halting.

"Come to the house. They have sent for Mary," he answered quietly.

"Sent for Mary!" I repeated dully.

"Yes. Captain Maxwell is here; she is to go to London," and at his words the earth and sky seemed to darken before me. To London—to London!

"But you will not let her go!" I cried.

"I not let her go, Dick? What have I to say? There is no help for it, she belongs to a larger world than ours."

"But what is she to them—she belongs to us!"

"He is her kinsman," said my father.

"I don't care——" I burst out.

"My poor boy, you care too much, that is plain to see! You must bear up, Dick. This is but what I foretold, what I feared, only it has come to pass sooner than even I expected."

"And Mary, father?" I asked, starting toward the house.

"She would not go until she had seen you."

"You mean——" I faltered.

"She leaves Dane's Hill to-day," said my father.

"It's monstrous!" I cried.

"You must meet it like a man; for, after all, it is harder for her. She will go out amongst strangers who may or may not cherish her as she has been cherished here by us. Bear this in mind, Dick, when you part from her."

"I'll not part from her!" I said.

We were at the stile now, where one entered the garden from the meadow, and I paused.

"Come, Dick!" said my father.

"I—I cannot go into the house now," I said, leaning against the wall. "Go on, father, I will follow presently."

"Remember, Dick, that after all she is a staunch little maid with a mind of her own, for all her gentleness. Come as soon as you can," and with a pitying backward glance my father left me.

Strange what a difference a few short hours had made.

A score of wild projects flashed through my mind, but my soberer sense told me there was nothing I could do. She would go to London—to London! I rested my arms on the wall and buried my face in my hands.

“Dick! Dick, they are going to take me away!”

I glanced up quickly. It was Mary. Her face was white, and I could see that there were traces still of tears on her cheeks. She held out her hands as she ran toward me.

“They have come for me!” she cried miserably.

I caught her hands in mine. I recalled my father’s words and vowed that as I loved her I would spare her so far as I could.

“I know, Mary, my father has just told me,” I said.

“I—they are waiting for me even now——”

I drew her into my arms, and held her so for a long moment.

“God help and pity us both!” I muttered brokenly.

“I shall not forget you, Dick, never—never—never,” she whispered, passing her arms about my neck and raising her lips to mine. “Never—Dick, never!”

“I know you will not forget, sweetheart—nor I!”

“Oh, why did they come! I had so much rather they had forgotten me utterly, for I have been so happy here—so happy!”

We were silent, but she still clung to me.

“What does he say?” I asked at length.

“Only that I am to go to London.” She stamped her little foot in a sudden fury. “I hate him! I know I shall always hate him! He speaks of your father having discharged his obligations in an honourable fashion, and that is all he finds to say! I hate him!”

“There, dear one! Mayhap it is for the best,” I said.

“You do not think it is for the best! What is best is

for me to remain here where I am happy—with you—with those I love, that is what is best for me!”

“Perhaps he will let you return after a time,” I said, seeking desperately for something to say that would comfort her.

“When my heart is broken—yes! I don’t want to go, and it was cruel for him to come for me like this without warning—and I must go this very day! Think, Dick, to-day! They are waiting for me now, but I would not go until I had seen you—they could not make me——”

“Has he told you aught of his plans for you?” I asked.

“He has told me nothing. I am to get ready to go with him, that is all I know, except that he is to take me to London.”

“That is enough to know,” I said bitterly.

“Oh, Dick, there must surely be some way out!”

Here we heard my father’s voice. He was calling from the garden. I guessed that Captain Maxwell was becoming impatient. I took Mary in my arms for the last time, and as we stood there oblivious of all else but the emotion of the moment, my father came to us.

“Captain Maxwell would have you come now, dear child,” he said, and gently took her from me.

They passed into the garden, my father half leading, half supporting her; and ere I realised it she was gone from my sight. Then presently, as I listened, I heard the rattle of wheels, and knew that she was being borne away.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DANE'S HILL was a sorry spot for all after Mary left us. My mother in particular suffered deeply, and even Betty's high spirits experienced an eclipse, while I was disposed to think fate had selected me for an especial pang. The days slipped by slow enough; and then one morning as I was going about the place, Betty, in a state of high excitement, as I might know by her appearance, came running to me from the house.

"Come, Dick!" she called, quite out of breath. "Father has been to the village and there are letters—letters from Mary! And for each one of us—the dear!"

This was famous news, indeed, and I lost no time in following her into the house. I took my letter and retired to my room, in spite of Betty's indignant protests; for with sly malice she said that of all, mine would be the one most worth listening to.

I do not know quite what I was anticipating, but perhaps I feared that even in the brief space of time which had elapsed since her departure Mary might have changed in her feeling toward me; but as my father had said, she was a staunch little maid, and I was vastly comforted and reassured by the love her letter breathed, though it was modestly written, and even to say as much as she did find courage to say of her regard for me, had evidently cost her something of an effort. To read it brought my heart into my mouth and the tears to my eyes.

Having assured myself that her love for me had undergone no change, I now read her letter a second time, for I had neglected those portions of it that dealt with her journey to London. It had been without incident. She had ridden most of the way alone save for the woman Captain Maxwell had fetched with him to wait on her; as for the Captain himself, he had preferred the saddle to a place in the coach by her side.

Arrived in London they had gone to the house of Captain Maxwell's sister, Lady Bellesly, who lived in what seemed to Mary great state, in a very splendid palace in Aldersgate Street, where she had since been domiciled. Her new friends told nothing of their plans for her, only she hoped they might soon weary of her country ways and send her back to us. Yet she would have me know that she was not so very unhappy, all things considered; Lady Bellesly, an elderly and childless widow, treated her with kindness, and affection even, and what with the newness and strangeness of her surroundings there would have been much to amuse and occupy her had her heart not been wholly with us in the north country.

After this her letters, though they came at regular intervals, seemed to me to grow less and less free and outspoken, and I took it into my head she was keeping back something; and then at last it all came out. There was a certain Nevil Maxwell, the Captain's nephew, who had but lately returned from France, and my lady and the Captain greatly desired to arrange a match between them; in short, it was for this that she had been taken to London.

This news threw me into a torment, and I resolved that happen what might I would see her, since it was plain she would never need a friend more than now when she

was beset on all sides. I found, however, that it would be possible for me to do in the open what I was contemplating doing under cover, for my father himself proposed that I go to London.

"Your mother and I have been talking this matter over, Dick," he said to me, "and we think it best you should see Mary."

This quite took my breath away, since I had been until then disposed to think no one comprehended the depth of my love; that I was being denied both sympathy and understanding; so I burst out with something of my contrition and gratitude, which my father put aside.

"I know, Dick—I know," he said kindly. Then he continued, "It would be an evil thing if Mary were forced into a match against her inclination, and I think it's time we learned something of who Captain Maxwell is beyond his own telling, and the degree in which he was related to Madame Barras. It may be that no relationship exists, and there may be many reasons why he should be desirous to control Mary's future and see her wed to his nephew. Do you think you have cunning enough for a mission of this sort? I own I cannot even think where your quest will begin or where it may take you before it's ended. But the points to determine are these, if Captain Maxwell is really her kinsman, and if he is not, why he should wish his nephew to marry a portionless girl. But bear this in mind, Dick, your very discoveries may perhaps only remove Mary the further from you; for to my way of thinking there is sometimes as much to be feared from knowing too much as from knowing too little."

And so one day not above two months after Mary left Dane's Hill I set out on my journey south, revolving in my mind the excellent counsel my father had given me

at parting, though I doubted if I should profit much by it since the all important thing was to gain possession of Mary, and my planning simmered down to just this—a hasty marriage and prompt flight from London.

I had gone no further than a mile from Dane's Hill when I heard the clatter of hoofs, and turning in my saddle made out Thomas Preston, our Betty's much snubbed but constant admirer. I could not be mistaken, for he was astride his big black horse, which for months past had spent more time before our door than anywhere else, except perhaps in our stable. I drew rein, and Tom galloped up abreast of me.

"They have just told me at Dane's Hill that you are setting out for London, Dick! If you will have my company I'll gladly ride with you a little way."

I had rather a fondness for Master Tom, though I thought him overmuch given to melancholy and verse, so I told him I would gladly have him ride with me as far as he liked.

"Thank you, Dick!" he said gratefully, and we rode forward in silence for a little space.

I was thinking of life's contradictions. Here were Tom and Betty, whom everyone desired to see marry and who were supposed to cherish a somewhat similar wish themselves, certainly Tom made no bones that he did, and yet for months past they had kept themselves in a mighty state of turmoil with their quarrels and their reconciliations.

"Dick, 'tis shocking news Bet has told me of Mary!" he presently said. "And for your sake I hope she will be strong to refuse obedience."

"I hope so, too!" I agreed.

"You are but having a foretaste, Dick, of how one may suffer through the affections," said Tom, with feel-

ing. "And I hope you may be spared any fuller knowledge."

Which he doubtless meant me to take as a handsome speech on his part; but I merely growled out some unintelligible reply. I was willing to consider Tom as a possible brother-in-law, but my gorge rose against accepting him as one whose heart was shattered past all mending.

"How long do you think you'll be absent, Dick?"

"I don't know," I said.

"It may be you will not find me here when you return," said Tom moodily.

"Are you thinking of going away?" I asked.

"Who can be certain of anything!" and he heaved a prodigious sigh.

"None can be certain," I agreed.

"It has been a dreadful calamity—Mary's going away. I can see how it has changed your mother, Dick. As for Bet, her grief has corrupted her very nature; and where Bet suffers, I suffer, too!"

And indeed he spoke only the truth here, though the reason of his suffering was somewhat other than he would have had me to understand.

"Where shall you lodge in London?" asked Tom, after a pause.

"'Tis a matter I have not considered," I said.

"Go to the Three Tuns in Newgate!" advised Tom, who had himself been to London the year before, and I sometimes thought had been rather inclined to assume in consequence a greater worldly knowledge than was becoming.

"There are doubtless many good inns," I said, but privately I made mental note of the Three Tuns.

"But none better!" said Tom. "And, Dick—if you have the heart for it—go to the Globe Theatre on Bank-

side and see the players, it passes all! Eh, but I wish I might be with you on this junketing!" he exclaimed with sudden enthusiasm.

Which I thought was a most undignified way in which to speak of my mission, and promptly told him so.

"Oh, no offence, Dick!" he cried hastily. "Go to the Globe, and after you have seen the players, by all means see the bull and bear baiting; it is a monstrous fine sport, the best I ever did see, and there they have it to perfection!"

Well out on Stainmore I parted from Tom Preston, and was not sorry to have it so. I could only wonder how a man with interest in the serious concerns of life could let his mind dwell on such light matters. Players and bull baiting, forsooth! I had weightier things to think on.

Late one afternoon under a leaden sky I rode into London, my country eyes and ears assailed by such sights and sounds as never before greeted them; for as I went in toward the heart of the city I found myself in company with gangs of pack horses, or pushing my way with difficulty between great wagons, of which there was an endless number. From lanes and narrow by-streets there came incessantly noises such as I knew must be made by smiths and armourers at their work; but among all other sounds, and dominating them, was the noise of the city's traffic, the rumble of wheels and the beat of hoofs blending into a distant, thunderous roar. If my eyes and ears saw and heard much the like of which Westmoreland could not furnish, my nose, too, partook in a lesser degree of the marvels that were spread out before me; indeed, of all evil smells, this famous town of London presented varieties which were wholly strange to me. Perhaps to the Londoner born and bred these would have had their

special significance, merely telling him that here such and such trades were being carried on; that in this lane were tanners; in that, soap-makers; in another, dyers.

Then from craning my neck to look at the tops of buildings, or to catch a distant glimpse of Paul's ruined tower, what time the wagons and pack horses gave me for this, I looked down into the street itself and found that my horse was splashing his way up a gutter flowing with dirty water which swept gaily along rags and refuse of every sort, and was augmented at intervals by freshets of soapy water.

Presently I turned into Cheapside. Here were the most splendid houses I had yet seen. They were of great height, many of them being five stories, built of ornamental brick and timber; their gables faced the street, and each story projected over the one below, which gave them a most imposing appearance. In every shop were 'prentices who called their masters' wares with tireless, brazen lungs. I saw those whom I took to be grave city merchants, fine ladies, and a goodly concourse of foppish gallants, attended by servants who carried their swords, which I thought a vastly lazy practice.

I found the Three Tuns in Newgate, which Tom Preston had so highly recommended; the landlord of which even professed to remember Tom himself, when I took occasion to speak of that young gentleman to him, though I doubt not he was more civil than truthful. After I had changed my travelling dress for an apparel that I deemed more modish, and after I had supped, I sallied forth to find the house of Lady Bellesly in Aldersgate Street. While I had been thus busy, night and a measure of silence had settled down on the city, as I discovered when I ventured abroad on my errand. There was now a continual passing of stately coaches, and I fancied the oc-

cupants of these were on their way to balls or masquerades, or perhaps even to the king's own palace. Before the doors of many of the houses and shops were suspended gaily coloured lamps, and down some of the lanes and lesser streets blazed bonfires, as had become the custom since the plague, to clear the air.

By dint of inquiry I finally made my way into Aldersgate Street, and here a man, who by his dress I took to be a groom, civilly pointed out a very great house where he said resided Lady Bellesly. I went quickly up the steps and my knock brought a red-faced serving-man in fine livery to the door. He told me that her ladyship and her ladyship's niece were abroad that night. I had not reckoned on this disappointment, and I went sadly away to wait for the morrow.

I strolled back to Cheapside and watched the crowds there for a little time, and then home to my inn and to bed. I slept ill, and the roar of the city roused me early. I dressed at leisure, breakfasted, and a little after nine o'clock started forth a second time for Aldersgate Street.

The same servant I had seen the night before answered my knock; he now looked me over rather superciliously, but he showed me into a small waiting room and there left me to take my name to Mary. I had not long to wait, for I heard a light step in the hall, and Mary herself came quickly into the room.

"Dick! I could not believe it was you!" she cried.

And then she said no more, for I had lifted her in my arms, and held her against my heart, whilst I vowed to myself that it would go hard with him who should seek to take her from me, or deprive me of the love which I could see in the dark eyes that were raised to mine.

First she had me tell her of my mother, and father, and Betty.

"And now you, Dick—and what has brought you to London?" she asked.

"It was your last letter that fetched me here in such haste, sweet!" I said.

"Oh, Dick—dear Dick, I have not even dared to dream that you would follow me here!" she whispered.

"Better than that, I'll not leave London unless I take you with me!" I said, drawing her to me again. "What of this Nevil Maxwell?"

"I have given no one reason to think I could ever care for him; indeed, Dick, I have told her ladyship I could never love him——"

"And how does she take that?" I asked.

"She only laughs at me, for she will take nothing seriously that I say to her in this matter."

Here the curtains at the door were drawn aside, and a lady swept into the room whom I at once surmised could be none other than Mary's protectress. She paused on seeing me, in real or affected surprise.

"Your pardon, my dear," she said very sweetly, addressing Mary. "I did not know but you were alone," and she gave me a swift scrutiny.

"This," said Mary, "is Mr. Farraday. Dick, my aunt, Lady Bellesly."

Her ladyship swept me a curtsey.

"I am charmed beyond expression to meet one of whom Mary has so often spoken," she said graciously, but for all her fair words she did not look charmed. She turned to Mary.

"My dear, have you forgotten? I am sure Mr. Farraday will yield readily to the claims of a prior engagement," and she smiled on me.

"Surely, madame," I said, for I was aware she desired me to be gone.

"You will come again, Dick?" said Mary wistfully.

"Mr. Farraday is in London for some time?" asked Lady Bellesly.

"Until the business that has brought me here is settled, madame," I said, and I left her to speculate on the nature of that business.

"Then we may hope for another call," she said.

I bowed my thanks and bowed myself from the room, but Mary followed me into the hall.

"Come in the morning, Dick—before ten; I shall be alone then," she whispered.

I could only press her hand, for the servant had swung open the street door, and a moment later I found myself going soberly down the steps, mightily depressed by the briefness of my call and the abruptness with which her ladyship had terminated it.

With a whole day and night before me, I bethought me, rather shamefacedly, that Tom Preston had advised me to see the players at the Globe Theatre on Bankside. The bull and bear baiting I decided to forego, having but little taste for sport of that kind.

I dined that day at The Swan in Dowgate, and thence set off for Queenhithe, where I took boat for Bankside on the Surrey shore. There were a great number of people setting forth on the same errand as mine, as I judged, for there were many boats on the river; and as these passed each other the watermen exchanged jests and strong words. I was put ashore at the Falcon stairs before the Falcon Tavern, and had naught to do but follow the crowd to a great ten-sided building having a thatch roof. This was the theatre, as one might know by the figure of Hercules supporting a globe above the entrance way. The thatch roof only covered a part of the building, I discovered when I had paid my shilling, which bought

me a seat in the third and lowest of the three circular galleries which were built out from the wall. These galleries and the stage were under the roofed part, but the middle space or yarde, as it is called, where the poorer sort of people sat, was open to the sky.

I took my seat and stared about me curiously. On each side of the stage, which extended far out into the yarde, were boxes, one of which was filled with musicians, who were now making a mighty flourish with their instruments, which drowned out every other sound. A gentleman who was sitting near me said it was the second sounding and that presently there would be a third, after which the play would begin. Seeming to sense it that I was a countryman, he pointed out to me that in addition to the boxes, which were filled with splendidly dressed gallants, there were also seats on the stage itself where one might sit for an extra sixpence; indeed, these seats were already filled by a score or more of young men of fashion who were smoking pipes of tobacco, and who were the subject of much merriment on the part of the groundlings in the yarde, whose wit was of the frankest sort. But it was not an audience of men alone; there were a number of women in the galleries, dressed like fine ladies, in rich silk gowns, taffeta petticoats, and with gold threads in their hair, as was the fashion.

As my glance wandered about the place there fell under my eye a man in one of the boxes, and though a goodly number of years had passed since my last meeting with him, I was sure it was Captain Maxwell. The music sounded for a third time and the play began, but I had lost all relish for what was going forward on the stage. I scarcely took my eyes off Captain Maxwell, and when before the play was half over I saw that he was preparing to leave the place, I hurried after him. He went

toward the Falcon Tavern, which he entered, but came forth again almost immediately accompanied by a young man who, from a certain family likeness, I judged was none other than his nephew, Nevil Maxwell. They crossed to the stairs and I followed, determined to learn if possible where they lodged in the city. It was a knowledge that might be useful to me, I argued.

My boat kept in the wake of theirs as they were rowed across the Thames. They landed at Queenhithe, and I followed them at a safe distance so they could not know their steps were being dogged. They went in toward Paul's ruined tower, and presently just in advance of me entered the church. That noble building seemed wholly abandoned to the common uses of the people. Men were hurrying from side to side carrying bundles, there were peddlers even, with their wares, who did not hesitate to stop the passer-by and solicit trade. As Captain Maxwell and his nephew passed out of the building I heard an exclamation and a quick step beside me, and I was rudely jostled by a tall lean fellow in a frayed doublet.

"Damn you, sir, where are your eyes!" he shouted, and without waiting for my reply, which would have been to the point, since his violence had all but knocked me down, he thrust past me and dashed away at top speed.

It flashed in upon me as I hurried from the church that he was in pursuit of Maxwell, too, and I was not mistaken in this conjecture, for I was just in time to see him overtake them, when without ceremony he seized the Captain by the shoulder and swung him about so that they stood facing each other. Maxwell's assailant, though not in his first youth, had a certain wild energy. His face was distorted by rage and hatred, yet even so there was something familiar there, some feature, some trick of expression that I had known, though it defied me to place

it; but I was sure I had seen that fierce eye, and those straight black locks that swept the collar of his rusty doublet; but where?

For a moment he stood facing Maxwell without a word, and then I heard him call the Captain a thief and villain, and he followed this up by loosing a perfect torrent of oaths and abuse. He released the Captain and fell back a step, while his hand closed on the hilt of his sword.

"My God—you—and alive!" I heard Maxwell say in a hoarse whisper.

"I were much better dead!" cried the other, with a wild look, and his long brown fingers plucked at the hilt of his sword, and I heard him say through his clenched teeth: "If you are a man you will give me what I crave!" and out flashed his sword.

He did not wait for Maxwell to draw, but lunged furiously at him. Luckily, Nevil Maxwell, quicker than his uncle, whose face had gone white as death, struck up his blade. The fierce-eyed stranger turned on him with an oath.

"This is our quarrel, sir," he cried. "Do you keep out of it!"

"By your leave, I'll do nothing of the sort," rejoined young Maxwell.

"I tell you I have no desire to harm you," said the stranger.

"Nor I any desire to be harmed—for that reason——" and Mr. Maxwell threw himself into a posture of defense.

The other gave him a contemptuous glance, sprang forward, and young Maxwell's sword was knocked from his hand.

A crowd was gathering swiftly about the three, and Nevil Maxwell's sword was picked up and obligingly re-

turned to him, for the prevailing impression was that the trouble lay between him and the tall fellow. But just here some one raised a cry that the watch was coming, and a burly porter sang out:

“To your heels, gentlemen—and better luck next time!”

Captain Maxwell and his nephew turned, and the crowd made way for them; their tatterdemalion assailant cast a hurried look about, and as the watch came up panting, sheathed his sword and made off.

CHAPTER EIGHT

BY ten o'clock the next day I was in Aldersgate Street, but it perplexed me not a little that it was Lady Bellesly and not Mary who presently came into the room whither I had been shown by the servant. Her ladyship began very sweet, though it was a sweetness that I mistrusted.

It had been a rare joy to Mary to have seen me, she said, sinking into a chair, and motioning me to resume mine. To these words of hers I merely bowed, for I conceived them to be but a preliminary courtesy which meant nothing. Mary was very fond of me, her ladyship assured me after a moment's silence; she was fond of us all — of my father, mother, and sister; indeed it would be mighty wonderful were it otherwise, said madame with a sudden generous candour. And again I bowed, but I doubted not I had a somewhat fuller knowledge of Mary's feeling for me and our household at Dane's Hill than that possessed by Lady Bellesly.

Then she changed her tactics somewhat, assuring me she did not wish to pry into my affairs, but did I expect to make a long sojourn in London? Her ladyship gave me a quick glance as she asked this. I thought of my purse, which day by day was growing lighter, but answered boldly that my stay would be indefinite. Lady Bellesly appeared to ponder my words, then presently she said with much seeming frankness:

“Mr. Farraday, though you show little or no inclination to treat with me in any very open manner, yet I

should consider that I was doing you a wrong if I allowed this to influence me in what I have in mind to say to you."

I muttered something about not being aware that I had anything to keep from her ladyship, but this she put aside by a somewhat impatient gesture.

"Nay, a little honesty will do no hurt, nor will it influence fate one way or the other," she made answer with a dry smile on her thin lips.

I agreed to this and waited for what was to come next.

"You care for Mary?" she said.

"Madame, I love her," I answered simply.

"I thought as much, and I am sorry for you."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because it is a pity that you should have given your heart to one who is separated from you by so many obstacles! But then hearts mend, and I doubt not there is still female loveliness in Westmoreland, where you will yet wed according to your taste."

"Will your ladyship tell me, what are the obstacles?" I asked, ignoring the rest that she had said.

"I need not speak of them except to say that they are insurmountable."

"I cannot believe it!" I said.

For answer she gave me a glance that mingled pity and contempt, so that I felt my cheeks burn. I sensed it, too, by the hard, steely glitter in her pale eyes, that, while her ladyship might prefer to carry her point when it could be cheaply done by exercise of a little tact, yet there was another side to her nature; and that to antagonise her might prove no very agreeable experience. However, she contented herself by merely saying:

"You are only a boy; you will outgrow this passion. 'Tis a common failing to desire the thing we cannot have;

you will be wiser presently; you will go home, and you will forget——”

“Never!” I burst out, interrupting her.

“That is a long word, Master Richard Farraday; much may happen in a year—in less time than that even!”

“Do you mean that I am not to see Mary again?” and in spite of myself my voice failed me as I put the question.

“Yes.”

“But this is not her desire,” I said.

“If there is comfort for you in the thought—no.”

“Then, madame, I beg to say that you may find it difficult to enforce that rule.”

Her ladyship smiled again at this bold speech of mine.

“Mr. Farraday, I have given you some excellent advice, which, with the usual perversity of a man in love, I see you have no inclination to act upon. So be it then. But remember this, you will not see Mary again—that is settled.”

“No, madame, not of necessity settled,” I answered stubbornly.

At this her eyes blazed with a quick anger.

“Boy, you are a fool!” she said with such utter scorn of me that again I felt the colour come into my face.

She rose from her chair, striking the palms of her hands sharply together as she did so. Almost instantly the man servant presented himself at the door.

“Show this gentleman out. And remember, if he calls again, you are not to admit him.”

I waited to hear no more, but, with my best bow, passed swiftly out into the hall and thence into the street, while at my back the great doors closed with a clang.

I went from my Lady Bellesly's presence with a wealth of bitterness in my heart; but for all her opposition one

great advantage remained mine—Mary loved me. And I told myself I would cut but a poor figure if with her favour I did not worst the Maxwells in the game they had set out to play.

I had got no great distance when I felt the weight of a hand on my shoulder, and turning quickly I found myself looking into a familiar face. It was none other than the coachman who had driven Madame Barras up to our vicarage door that memorable night long ago! I would have known the fellow anywhere, so gently had time dealt with him.

"Well, young gentleman," said he, looking me over with approval, while his hard features relaxed into a smile. "Well, young gentleman, they breed men of a right good size in your part of the world; but then, faith, one needs long legs to travel those roads!"

"So you remember me?" I said.

"Remember you—no. To say no more than the truth, I'd not have known you from Adam himself!" and he emitted a dry cackle that passed with him for a laugh.

I must have looked puzzled at this singular disclaimer, for he continued his mirth.

"You want to know how it is that I was so sure of you? Easy, master, for her young ladyship did you the honour to point you out to me."

"Her young ladyship—what young ladyship?" I asked.

Whereupon the fellow very rapidly closed first one eye and then the other. By which I understood that it pleased him to fancy that I was not dealing openly with him.

"Why, her young ladyship that you came to see, to be sure!" he said.

"What do you know of her?" I asked eagerly, for now I saw he was speaking of Mary.

"Her ladyship told me to be on the watch when you left the house, that I might follow and give you this, sir," and from the depths of a wide pocket in the skirt of his coat he drew forth a note which he handed me.

It was only a line, evidently written in haste, but it sufficed, for Mary bade me come that night at eight o'clock to the gate in the garden wall. My Mercury, who smelt of pipes of tobacco and strong waters, watched me with a grin on his hard old face as I pored over Mary's note; and when I had finished reading it and put it away in my pocket, I slipped him a shilling.

"Well, good luck, sir!" he said as I turned from him.

"Thank you," and so we parted.

My impatience was sufficient to take me into Aldersgate Street that night in advance of the hour named by Mary. The garden where we were to meet lay at the back of the house, and could be entered from a lane which led past a door in the high wall surrounding it. This lane was narrow and illy paved with round stones. It was now quite dark, but by keeping close to the wall I presently came on the door. It was of solid wood, and opened under an arch. I tried it, but found it fastened, so I rapped softly but got no response at first, though directly I heard some one lift the chains, and the door was opened a little way.

"Dick?"

It was Mary herself who spoke.

"Yes, sweetheart?"

And the door was further opened that I might enter. There in the darkness, with my darling in my arms, I felt my courage and my faith in the future come back to me.

"We have not many minutes, Dick!" said Mary, as she gently withdrew herself from me.

"Tell me, when was it your aunt resolved you should not see me?" I asked.

"Last night Captain Maxwell supped with her; no doubt she told him of your being in London, Dick; at any rate, after he had gone she sent for me to come to her——"

"And gave orders that you should not see me."

"Not quite in so many words, Dick, but she did say that with my permission she would see you if you came to-day, and alone, as there were some matters she desired to speak of with you."

"And you could not say nay to that!"

"No."

"Well, I have been forbidden the house," I said.

"I know, for she came from the interview with you in a great rage, vowing I should not see you again; but this was no more than I had expected, for you are a stubborn fellow, Dick, and I had arranged with old Jarvis, the coachman, to follow you from the house and give you my note."

"Which he did."

"They want me to marry Nevil Maxwell; that is the whole secret of their opposition, for my aunt taxed me with caring for you——"

"And you?"

"I told her that I had always cared for you, and should ever continue to care for you!"

"Bravely said!" I cried, well pleased with the boldness of her words. "While I can think that, I can snap my fingers at Nevil Maxwell!"

"Dick, I think he as little desires the match as I do," said Mary.

But at this I laughed, for I could not believe there was anyone who could be so blind to her beauty.

"What, would you have me think that coxcomb not madly in love with you?" I scoffed.

"I think his affections are disposed of elsewhere, and to some fine lady——"

"Fine lady!" I cried. "Fine fiddlesticks! Why, dear one, where would he discover a finer than the maid out of Westmoreland?"

And now I told Mary of my plans. That we, who were most concerned, should take our future into our own keeping. At first she hung back from the idea, but I urged my case to such purpose that very presently I could see she was yielding and that I should have my way in the matter; and, in truth, I grew more and more enamoured of my own eloquence.

"But your father, Dick; what will he say? 'Tis of him I am thinking; suppose he should withhold his forgiveness——"

"But he will not; wait and see! There will never have been such a hero amongst all the Farradays, living and dead, as I when I ride up to Dane Hill's farm with my wife. Can't you see them all as they come running to the door?"

"Oh, Dick, I can't wait to see them!"

And then I told her how she was missed, how they could do nothing but talk of her, and how my mother was grieving her heart out for her. All of which was true enough.

"Do they care so much, Dick?" asked Mary softly, after a little silence.

"Aye, and a thousand times more than I have the wit to say," I assured her.

But I did not quite have my way with her. An elopement she had not considered until that very moment, and from so daring an adventure she was inclined to hang back

in some alarm; so I said the morrow would do. If I needs must, I could wait that long for her to prepare for it, whereat she said:

"Indeed, Dick, you speak as if it were nothing at all but rushing off to some marrying parson! As for to-morrow, it is a Friday——"

"Then Saturday," I said.

"No, for on Saturday my aunt takes me early to Mr. Selwyn's country seat near Hampton, and we do not return to London until Monday."

"Then why not slip away now?"

"Dick! There's a deal of nonsense in that suggestion; I must have time to prepare for the journey, and I must choose a day and hour when I can escape from under my aunt's eye."

"But you think it will be Tuesday?" I urged.

"No sooner than that."

"And I shall have no chance to see you until you return here?"

"Nay, Dick, you must have some little patience; as soon as all things are in readiness and the way clear for us, I will despatch a letter to you at your inn by Jarvis. This will be some time Tuesday—in the morning most likely. There, are you content?"

And content I was, though I hardly admitted as much, for fear her mind might undergo some change.

"It is a wild and reckless thing we are doing, Dick, and your father and mother—how will you make your peace with them?" said Mary soberly.

"Easily, for your very presence will do that for me. I shall only have to say: See, I have brought her back! That will suffice."

"I pray it may," said Mary, with a little sigh. "And now, Dick, you must go, for I durst not remain longer."

By the door into the lane we parted, and I heard her slip the link at the end of the chain over its hook, and realised that I was not to come that way again in four long days.

Time lay heavy on my hands after that, though I devoted myself to sight-seeing with some vigour, since I had decided that possibly it would be some time ere I again visited this very famous town of London, where I now proposed to steal me a wife. By a little general talk with the landlord of the Three Tuns over a bottle of Rhenish I learned that they did a thriving trade in clandestine marriages at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Minories, where one might be duly wed without bans or license, and no questions asked. So I tramped thither Monday. It was hard by the Jewish quarter, and was, as a matter of fact, the smallest and meanest church I had yet seen in London; but my eyes saw a beauty in it that was never there, for as I looked I could fancy Mary coming from it on my arm, and life beginning very fair for us two, with the long vista of the years stretching away before us, each bringing its portion of love and contentment to our full hearts; and I swore under my breath that where it rested with me the sober fact should be no worse than my dream.

Tuesday morning brought Jarvis, the coachman, to the Three Tuns with the looked-for message. On a scrap of paper Mary had scrawled three words very large: "To-day at six."

I got into my best clothes that afternoon, spending more time before my glass than I had ever done before, and by three o'clock I was pacing the streets counting the minutes until it should be time to repair to Lady Bellesly's garden.

As it grew toward the appointed hour the short winter twilight set in, bringing with it a grey fog. Under cover

of this fog I ventured boldly into Aldersgate Street. Just at the entrance to the lane two men, appearing suddenly out of the banked-up mists, brushed past me, one taking the wall, and the other the curb, which gave me a great start. For a moment or two I waited at the mouth of the lane, and then, with no living thing in sight, entered it, and did not pause again until I stood before the door in the wall. Momentarily the fog was thickening about me, and as the lane grew dense with the damp vapours I wondered how we should find our way even out of Aldersgate Street. This added not a little to my impatience; and now I heard voices, but they came from the street and not from the garden, as I at first thought. An instant later I heard the shuffling of feet on the rough cobble-stones. I drew back under the arch of the doorway, which offered some shelter, and at that instant two men came swiftly out of the fog that choked the lane. I could not be mistaken, these were the two fellows who had brushed past me in the street, and that they had followed me I had no doubt, for I heard one say:

“Here is our gentleman!”

And breaking into a run, one a little in advance of the other, the pair of them came at me in a brisk, business-like fashion; for weapons they had stout cudgels, which in skilful hands make great play. I promptly drew my sword, with the use of which I was tolerably familiar, though I had never drawn it before except in fence, and even now, menaced as I was, I was held back by my aversion to make serious use of it.

But the fellow in the lead gave me no time for thought; he was now within striking distance, and he darted at me a blow which I turned on my blade, but before I could reach him he had sprung away to a safe distance. Meantime his comrade had passed at his back and now came

at me out of the fog from down the lane. It was lucky I had the doorway for a shelter, for the moment I made one yield his footing, the other was at me from his side. My only idea was that I had a couple of cut-purses to deal with, and I made no outcry. 'Twould answer my purpose if I could beat them off.

But suddenly I espied a third man, a man enveloped in a great cloak and with a mask before his eyes. He had come into the lane from Aldersgate Street, and now he paused on the edge of the fog-bound circle, beyond which one might not see. My first impulse had been to call out and ask him to lend a hand, since my belief was that he had been drawn thither by the sound of blows; but now I realised that this was a useless thing to do, that his interest was with my assailants; and, in proof of this, when by a lucky stroke that was not all skill, I sent the stave of the fellow on my right back over his head, it fell at the feet of this silent onlooker, who picked it up and returned it to its owner.

Yet I was holding my own famously well, and my cold north country blood was warming to the work when, in making a shift of my position to face the fellow on my left, my foot slipped on the uneven cobbles, which brought me down to my knees. Instantly the two were on top of me, and a perfect rain of blows descended on my head and shoulders; my sword was knocked from my hand, I heard it clang against the wall opposite, and then the grey fog turned black, and consciousness left me.

CHAPTER NINE

HOW long I lay unconscious I do not know, but at last out of utter vacuity I came slowly back to a sense of things. My head pained me intolerably; it throbbed and roared until my temples seemed like to split. Yet there was small wonder this should be so; indeed, the only wonder was that I lived after the fierce cudgelling that pair of bullies had given me in the lane.

My head was bandaged, and these bandages, either from accident or design, were brought down over my eyes so that I could not see; but for all this I knew there were people about me, and that I was stretched out flat on my back on a bed. I sought to raise my hand to my head, but found I could scarce lift it, while the mere attempt to do so brought such added pain to my racked body that I could not repress a groan.

This got me immediate notice from my attendants, whoever they were, for steps quickly approached where I lay, and someone raised my head.

"Here, my chicken, take a pull at this," I heard a strange voice say, and a glass was held to my lips.

It contained brandy, as I knew by the odour, and I took great, thirsty swallows.

"God! You have given him enough!" I heard a second man's voice say.

Swiftly after I had drunk of the brandy all pain left me. My temples still throbbed, it is true, but the hurt of it was not nearly so great. I wondered where I was. I

thought of Mary, and of the failure of my plans. We had been betrayed, doubtless. No matter, I would get word to her presently—presently. My mind seemed to dwell on the word, and then sleep, or its counterfeit, came to my senses, and all was a blank.

Next I heard what sounded like the distant roar of cannon; the dull echoes lifted me out of the black depths into which I had fallen, each surging burst of sound bringing me nearer complete consciousness. I listened, desperately intent, timing the reports by the throbbing of my pulse, and then the reverberations died away in the distance, and there was silence.

After another interval, though how long it endured I knew not, I again issued from my stupor. For a time I lay scarce on the edge of consciousness, with the black void from which I had emerged a menace. At first I had no memory of any part of what had occurred; then, little by little, I recalled how I had gone into Aldersgate Street to my rendezvous with Mary; next, the fight in the lane came back to me. But what had happened to me since then I could not say.

Presently I became aware of sounds which I was barely able to distinguish as the speech of men. Sometimes this speech was boisterous, and sometimes it was a mere distant and confused murmur; but to fix any meaning to what I heard was beyond me, though I came to understand that these men, who were always talking or laughing or singing, were very near to me, and that there was a medley of other sounds and movements; for now I seemed raised aloft, and then I sank, and then I was lifted again; not just myself, but the very bed on which I lay partook of this movement, and all this while there was a groaning and creaking going on, now underneath me, now above me, now at my side, and with the groaning and creaking

was a curious rushing sound to which I could fix no name. Yet it troubled me not a little for this very reason; but of all the sounds that tormented me I was most aware of the voices.

This continued indefinitely, interminably; whether for hours or days I could not tell. But at last I was able to catch single words and sentences, and then I knew that one man appeared to be doing most of the talking; save for an occasional word here and there he had it all his own way.

"Aye, it galled us to be taunted by those heathen, who would sometimes tell us we were growing fat for want of exercise! This, I say, nettled us; yet to me it brought a special honour, for one day a Turkish officer came from the town under a flag of truce. He was taken before our commander, to whom he delivered his message, saying how it was reported we would go as we had come, without assaulting the city, and that rather than it should be said we had had no fight with them, his Lord Turbeshaw had sent him with a challenge to any captain, with whom he would fight, each for the other's head."

There was a pause, and then: "It was decided choice should be made by lot, and to my great pride the lot fell to me."

Here I lost the voice, and for a time could distinguish only a confused murmur, but presently my brain seemed to clear.

"Our troops were drawn up, leaving a fair field for the combat, whilst the walls were crowded by the Turks. At the sounding of trumpet we charged, and I had such luck that I struck my opponent through the sights of his helmet, so that he fell to the ground. His head I presented to that most noble and Christian prince, our general, who graciously accepted it."

In a kind of heavy stupor I had heard all this, but whether the voice was real or not I was unable to say; indeed, I was almost ready to forswear the evidence of my senses, and count it naught but part and parcel of some dream. But the voice went on, with an eager, ringing note to it, and pitched a little louder than the majority of voices.

“The Turks chafed at the overthrow of their champion, more especially one of his friends, who, for very madness, sent me a particular challenge. I could not with honour have refused to meet him. So the next day the same space was cleared and the same scene enacted. At the sound of the trumpet we made our charge, and met with a great shock, so that our lances were shattered, and the Turk nigh unhorsed; whirling, we each discharged a shot from our pistols. The Turk's bullet hit me upon the breastplate and glanced off, but mine took effect in his left arm, and he fell from his horse and lay bruised and stunned. After this the Turks made some sallies every day, but to no purpose, so that to fill up the time, I being then very young and somewhat foolhardy, sent a message to the ladies of the Turks that I was not so enamoured of their lovers' heads but I would give them to anyone of rank who would reclaim them by combat. This challenge failed not of its effect, and was accepted by a Turk of rank called Bonny Mulgro. We fought on the same ground as before, but under somewhat different conditions——”

“Sure, you were killed this time, Captain!” a voice broke in.

And at this sally there went up a great shout of laughter, but suddenly it died away in a long painful silence, such as one might feel, and in the pause I felt my bed rise and sink, and rise again, with that strange motion I

could by no means understand, and I heard what seemed to be the wind whistling and shrieking through the bare branches of trees. Then I caught the voice of the first speaker, who said very deliberately and with a chilling kind of courtesy:

"Am I to understand that the gentleman is pleased to doubt any part of my poor share in this trifling adventure, which I am telling merely for the solace of our company?"

There was another pause, but very brief this time, and the interrupter said:

"God forbid!"

And with such unmistakable fervour that there was another burst of laughter, but this time smothered and wholly respectful.

"I would have it so," said the voice that I now knew belonged to him they called Captain. "I say, we fought under different conditions. First, we rode at each other discharging our pistols, by which no harm was done; whereupon we fell to with our axes, and so strongly that sometimes one, and sometimes the other, had hard work to keep his saddle. Indeed, it went ill with me, for I received such a blow that I lost my battle-axe and was nearly unhorsed, whereat a great shout went up from the ramparts. My adversary prosecuted his advantage to the uttermost of his powers, and had it not been for the readiness of my horse and my own judgment in such matters I must have been slain. But by God's assistance, I not only avoided the Turk's onslaught, but having drawn my sword I pierced him through the back and body, so that he was obliged to quit his horse, and he stood not long ere he lost his head, as the rest had done. The whole army was so pleased with me that I was taken in triumph to the general's pavilion with a guard of six thousand men and

with three horses, before each of which was borne a Turk's head on a lance. The Prince received me with great honour and bestowed upon me a fair horse, richly furnished, and a cimeter and belt worth three hundred ducats."

All this while I was becoming more and more alert, and with the third Turk slain, in whose fate I had taken a vague and sleepy sort of interest, I was disposed to know more of my surroundings. Turning slightly, I found I could move my hands and feet. I recalled that the last time I had attempted this I had suffered cruelly; clearly my condition was improved. My heavy eyes opened, but they were looking at the back of the bandages that had fallen down over my face so that I was as one blind-folded. However, I made shift to raise my hand and pushed these back out of the way. Close above me was an oaken ceiling, which was crossed by square timbers. I might have touched these beams with my hand had I wished. That it was night-time I knew by the quality of the light in the place, and moving my head a little I saw a great lanthorn where it hung from a hook midway of the ceiling. With infinite difficulty I managed to turn further on my side, which brought my face toward the light, and saw a group of men who were seated about a table placed in the centre of what seemed to be a small, low room. They were still talking, but my concern was now all centred in myself, and beyond the fact that I distinguished the sound of voices, I knew nothing of what was going forward.

Of the group about the table I noticed more particularly, for he first came under my glance, a big, bearded fellow with fierce moustaches, in the dress of a soldier. His companions, of whom there were half a score, were of many sorts, judging by their attire; some richly dressed,

and others in frayed doublets that had seen much hard usage; others again wore Monmouth caps on their heads, coats of mail, and Irish stockings. With all my eyes I stared at the group under the lanthorn, and as it swung to and fro, the beams and woodwork creaked and groaned, and my bed rose and sank; never for a moment was it still!

Then all of a sudden someone cried out:

"Faith, Captain, your bunk-fellow's come to life!"

Whereat the bearded man I had first noticed sprang quickly off the chest where he was seated and strode to my side.

"Eh, lad, how fare you?" he asked in a deep, full voice as he bent above me. For all his great beard and fierce moustaches of a reddish colour, and his tanned and weather-beaten skin, he looked at me from out of a pair of the kindest blue eyes conceivable.

"Where am I?" I asked.

I had expected to say this aloud, but the words came painfully from my lips in an almost inaudible whisper.

"Where are you?" And he gave a great cheery laugh. "Why, tossing off the Downs, to be sure, waiting a favourable wind."

But I did not understand what he meant by this.

"Is your cracked head better?" he asked after a moment's pause.

"How long have I lain so?" I demanded.

He pursed up his bearded lips.

"Why, to say true, a goodish time. They said you were drunk and had got a broken head in some tavern brawl, and they dumped you in with the drunken riff-raff forward, but I spied you out and had you brought hither, for I liked not the look of that cracked head of yours. Do you rest easy? Master Watton, the surgeon, will be

here presently to put fresh bandages on your hurts, and if he says you can take it, I'll fetch you some food."

But I had been staring hard into the face of the speaker, and memory had been very busy with me. I was thinking of a Sunday long past.

"John Smith!" I cried, or rather whispered, for with all the energy that went into the exclamation the result was no more than a whisper.

"John Smith, neither more nor less," said John Smith.

"How came I here, and where am I?" I asked.

"How you came by your broken head is more than I can tell you. As for where you are, that is readily answered: you are aboard the ship *Susan Constant*, and by grace of contrary winds we are this moment in the Channel, where we have been this week past; all of which time you have lain like one dead."

"At sea!"

And for a moment all things turned black before my eyes.

"Hold hard!" cried John Smith. "You have got back your wits, so abide with them!"

At sea—off the Downs! Now I understood the shrieking of the winds without, and the pitching and tossing; but whither were we bound? This I asked Smith.

"To America, or to be exact, that new land named Virginia, in honour of our late peerless virgin Queen!" said he.

Hearing this, I would have quitted my bed had it been possible, but when I made the effort it was only to fall back weak and exhausted, with a dancing mist before my eyes.

"Nay—nay!" said John Smith gently. "It will be some days yet before you get to your legs, so lie quiet. But tell me, who are you that seem acquainted with Cap-

tain John Smith—though even that can wait, if the effort is too much for you.”

But I was anxious he should know who I was, and I recalled our meeting at Alford; and when I had done, he burst out into another of his great cheery laughs.

“So it was there we met! I remember you well, Mr. Farraday, and your good uncle.”

“If I could but leave my bed!” I groaned, for now I was thinking of Mary, and my father and mother, and Betty, and Dane’s Hill farm. How were they to know what had befallen me?

“But you cannot, Farraday; though you can tell me how you chance to be here in this plight, with a broken head—and a soldier,” said Smith.

But I was not able to tell John Smith my story then. Indeed, I had made but little progress when I had to give over from my weakness, and the surgeon, Mr. Watton, joining Smith at my bedside, would have me keep silent; and I presently fell off into a troubled, fitful sleep. For between the beating I had received and the subsequent drugging, I had been brought as near death as a man could be brought, and live; and I doubt if I should have survived the ordeal through which I passed if it had not been for John Smith’s care of me. He had constituted himself my staunch friend and nurse from the very moment he had learned of my plight, as I was told afterward, and this because of the very hearty good that was in him. And through all those days when I was more dead than alive, he had cared for me with his man’s strength and his more than man’s tenderness.

It was not until the day after that first complete awakening that I was able to tell him my story, to which he listened with a ready sympathy, being greatly moved by the recital.

"You have been saved by God's mercy, Farraday!" he said when I had done. "I doubted much if you would ever recover consciousness, for you slept, so to call it, through the noise that the shipping made as we dropped down the river from Blackwall."

"I heard the cannon," I said.

"But you lay as if you heard naught. I was for having you put ashore, but perhaps I did you harm there."

"In what respect?" I said.

"Why, Wingfield and some of the other prime movers in the adventure, who are aboard, seem rather to think they must go counter to my opinion in all matters; so, perhaps, if I had advocated keeping you here it would have resulted in their sending you ashore. But to say true, a goodly number of our company came aboard as helpless as babes from their farewells at the taverns, and some of them brought broken heads, too; so it would have been difficult to discriminate."

"How was I brought here, and by whom?" I asked, for that was a mystery I wanted solved.

But Smith shook his head.

"That I have not been able to learn. They tell me you were one of the last to be put aboard, being brought out to us in a tilt boat as we lay in the river. 'Tis plain Captain Maxwell, of whom you tell me, took this method to rid himself of you. But one thing is sure, Farraday, the King's shilling once taken, or even sworn to have been taken, and attestation made, there is no help for the recruit unless he is bought out by his friends; so you must bear up and make the best of a bad business. When we reach Virginia, I promise you I will use my best endeavours to have you sent back by the returning ships."

But there was little comfort to me in this. Months must elapse, and what of Mary, what of my mother and father!

I doubt not but my agony of mind had much to do with retarding my recovery, for the days came and went, and I still lay in my bunk too weak to rise; while our ship, driven to and fro by contrary winds, rode the grey seas off the Downs.

By this time most of our company was stricken down with sea-sickness, and it was a sorry New Year's we spent there in the great cabin of the *Susan Constant*; and I suppose it was equally one of gloom aboard our two consorts, the *Discovery* and *Goodspeed*. The contrary winds continued to the very last of January, by which time I was able to creep about the cabin, though I had not yet ventured on deck, being still wretchedly weak.

I recall it was late one afternoon, and I was sitting on John Smith's sea-chest, when John Smith himself came from the deck with drops of frozen vapour sparkling on his beard and his eyes fairly dancing with excitement.

"Think you you are strong enough to venture forth with me, Farraday? A westerly blowing gale is whipping us along, and Newport says that in an hour's time at most we shall pass out of sight of land!"

By Smith's help I made my way to the deck. The day was almost spent, and off in that unknown west against which our faces were set the winter sun was dipping below the horizon. No other sails were in sight than those of the London Company's little fleet. Abeam of us and to the windward the *Discovery*, under shortened sail, rode the long billows, and a mile astern the *Goodspeed* could be made out. And looking past her, I saw the shores of England, now bold and of a proper height as the great seas lifted us on their crests, and then but a mere misty line as the gale sent us down the long slanting mountain-side of troubled waters. It was lonely and solemn beyond all words as we drove onward toward the red splendour of the

setting sun, with our rigging whistling and shrieking as the wind played through it, and our bellying sails great caverns of sound. Momentarily the line of the shore narrowed, the middle distance thickened and darkened by imperceptible gradations, and under the arch of that winter sky the long night grew up in our wake as we sped forward with decks dripping and aslant.

CHAPTER TEN

ONE by one our company got their sea-legs and crept forth to the deck when the weather would allow, and I began to hear a deal of talk of gold and pearls and precious stones. I could easily see that it was the hope of gain that had brought this motley crowd of adventurers together, and indeed we were well equipped for the handling of all the gold we were likely to gather, since the London Company had thoughtfully provided us with both jewellers and gold-refiners, whose services no one seemed to doubt would presently be in high demand. If aught was needed to fan this flame of greed, there were grizzled sailors amongst Captain Newport's crew who had been at the taking of many a fair prize from the Spaniards, whose talk pleased our gentlemen mightily; for John Smith said:

"They have but one hope in life—to possess themselves of riches quickly, so that they may return to London and there face the Bailiff's men without flinching." And he shook his handsome head in very sorrow over them. "I tell you, Farraday, there be some amongst us whose souls are as near hell as their profligate habits can sink them."

And, in truth, we had a number of men of broken fortune and loose lives, some of whom even, John Smith declared, were no better than atheists, which troubled him not a little, for soldier that he was, he was singularly free from dicing, debts, drunkenness, and swearing; in short, abhorring all things that smacked of irreligion, and of a

most devotional turn of mind; so much so that one of the sights of the cabin was to see this great bearded man at his prayers, which was a subject of infinite jest and merriment with some of our company, until Smith declared that if they interrupted him more he would surely slit their throats for them.

From Smith I learned of the launching of the Company. He told me that he had given above two years to this enterprise, and had staked a good part of his small estate on the success of the venture. A thing he was especially bitter about, however, was the manner in which the English Council had organised us, or, to say truer, not organised us at all, since we were without head. We had even set sail from England without knowing who was to be Governor of the Colony when it should be established, for the London Company in its wisdom had given us our instructions in a sealed box, with strict command that the seals should not be disturbed until we landed in Virginia; then only should we know who was chosen to rule over us.

The utter folly of this Smith was never weary of denouncing, for it practically left us out of bounds until our destination should be reached. The immediate result of this was entire confusion; each man felt himself as good as his fellow, since if he were of the rank of gentleman he might reasonably aspire, if not to the Governorship, at least to a place in the Virginia Council.

I could readily understand how this lack of all proper discipline was enough to gall a soldier such as my friend, who was well at outs with the more lawless of our adventurers in consequence of his seeking to enforce a certain amount of order for the general good. As he never said less than he thought, his downright speech and open candour earned him plenty of enemies in the crowded cabin. Yet when I ventured to hint at this, and that a little tact

might serve his purpose, he clapped me on the back in that free way of his, and his loud laugh issued from his bearded lips.

“Wait until we get ashore, Dick, and you shall see me lay the law to some of these fine gentlemen. Before we sailed I had the assurance of Sir George Somers and Richard Hackluyt, weighty men in the London Company who have adventured much, that I should be given some recognition ashore; at the least, this will mean a place in the Council; as much as that I have a right to expect.”

I had told Smith something of the disfavour in which he was held because of his outspokenness; yet I could not tell him there were those who did not hesitate to say that he was a liar of the first magnitude, and that he was utterly given over to bombast and conceit; but his critics did him wrong, for he was really neither vain nor boastful; he was merely a man of sturdy faith, and deep, full enthusiasms. Later, in the face of what he accomplished for our good in Virginia, even his enemies came to a juster understanding of him.

One thing which I observed with not a little amusement was this: that though he was one of the youngest of those aboard the *Susan Constant*, who, because of their forwardness in launching the Company, had a right to be counted of prime importance, yet of all he was the one oftenest quoted; and, to the very last, remained the most discussed and the most abused man on shipboard.

For all of Smith's befriending, I passed many lonely hours on that crowded ship. I doubted not that long before I could return to England Mary and the household at Dane's Hill farm would give me up for dead, and this conviction all but drove me mad. Besides, I had no assurance that I would be permitted to return with Captain Newport; it would rest with the Virginia Council to pass

on that point, and as yet no one knew of whom this Council would consist.

Contrary winds continued to baffle us, and the weeks dragged on. We were headed now for the Canaries, where we made our first land-fall and took on fresh water. After the weeks on shipboard, to set foot on the hard earth was a rare joy to a landsman born and bred.

How it came about I do not know to this day, but after we quitted the Canaries there was a rumour started that John Smith intended to murder the Council when it should be named, and set himself up for King of Virginia. More than this, it was claimed that he had his confederates on all three of the London Company's ships. How so scandalous a report could have gained currency with sober men is beyond me, yet with my own ears I heard the right and wrong of it hotly argued. I learned, too, that the slander emanated from Edward Wingfield, and had the support of John Martin, George Kendall, and John Ratcliffe, all of whom were very considerable men in our Company, especially Wingfield, a merchant of large means.

When I carried this news to Smith he roared over it.

"Eh, Farraday, what will not men say and believe! It passes all—it passes all!"

And presently he went up to Wingfield, whom he slapped on the back, saying for him not to fear, that though he might murder Martin, Ratcliffe, and Kendall, for the good of the new nation, himself he would surely keep for his Lord of the Exchequer. Wingfield took the jest in no proper spirit, but without a word turned on his heel and walked away, leaving the bearded soldier chap-fallen and discomfited.

"I tell you, Farraday, a serious man should never jest. I daresay that fool thinks me more than half in earnest," said Smith.

But there was no cessation to the rumours, which gained strength and amplitude from repetition. It was soon bruited about that my friend purposed to secure the treasure for himself when it was found, which was a blow aimed direct at the pocket of each needy adventurer.

In view of what followed, one must take into account that our company was in part at least composed of the veriest riff-raff; that the weeks on shipboard had brought out all that was worst in our tempers, and that despite the fact that we were so few in numbers factions had sprung up. These were for Wingfield and Kendall; these for Smith. And so it went from day to day, the factions lining up more strongly as time passed.

Presently, in the face of constant reiteration, charges, and counter-charges, Smith lost his temper; and one day in the great cabin accused Wingfield of circulating reports that did him much harm. This, Wingfield, whose face went white, denied.

"Come!" roared Smith, in a fury. "No shifty side-glances—I have proof you paid men to say they were approached by me in this matter!"

Kendall, Martin, and some others had drawn about Wingfield, which gave that gentleman a small measure of courage, for the blood came back to his cheeks.

"You forget yourself, Captain Smith; it is neither the place nor the time to go into this question."

"When will there be a fitter?" demanded Smith sternly. "If you have proof of my plotting, let it be shown—call your witnesses!"

"When the Council is known——" began Wingfield, with a dry, bloodless smile.

Smith shot him a swift glance.

"Our charter from the King allows of trial by

jury, as is fitting where the rights and liberties of Englishmen are at stake. Do you not forget that!"

"You may fare better with the Council than with the laws," rejoined Wingfield, plucking up his spirits by reason of the goodly backing that was his.

"Perhaps you would adventure a statement as to who is chosen?" said Smith.

"No doubt I could; perhaps I might even name the president, were there occasion for me to do so."

Smith took a step forward at this.

"Would you have me think——"

But at his near approach Wingfield drew back amongst his supporters with greater speed than dignity.

"Gentlemen!" he cried hastily.

Smith gave him a contemptuous glance.

"You sorely tempt me to drag you forth by the ears into the light of day. The very devil take you and your proofs!" he stormed.

"You shall hear of them later, and to some effect!" said the merchant.

"A good ship I know, and a poor cabin, and the language of a cannon, but a liar and cheat is beyond me——"

But here good Mr. Hunt, our preacher, who had just come from the deck, laid hold of the angry Captain's sleeve. He drew him aside and gently chid him for his hasty, choleric temper; and Smith presently flung out a surly apology to Wingfield, and quitted the cabin.

But the storm of which he was the centre, though abated, was yet to blow itself out. The memory of the words he had spoken was an open sore; and like the good hater he was, he kept heaping them up, that Wingfield might not complain he was cheated in the measure, as he told me. His enemies were busy, too, this while, but their

work was done in secret and to such purpose that before many more days had passed it was being very generally urged that he should be brought before some sort of special tribunal to answer to the charge of mutiny and conspiracy. It ended by his being placed under arrest; this, however, was a merely nominal infliction, and was more to discredit him than aught else.

He was still under restraint the last of March, when we sighted the island of Domenica, one of the West Indies; nor was he allowed to set foot on land there, the scandalous imputation being that he was but wanting a chance to communicate with his confederates on the other ships. But a climax to all this absurdity was reached a few days later when we anchored at one of the Virgin Isles.

It was, I think, the second day of our stay there, and I had gone ashore in one of the small boats with Thomas Emory and George Cassen, to look for turtles' eggs. I had left my companions and wandered off along the sands by myself, wishing to be alone, for I was overcome by a great wave of homesickness, when suddenly I came face to face on the lean fellow who had attacked Captain Maxwell that day in Paul's churchyard. I could not be mistaken! I was staring into those same dark eyes, that had something of wildness in their depths. My look of amazement brought him to a stand. He gave me a puzzled, doubting glance, but he said with a fine true courtesy:

"I daresay we have met before, sir, but the advantage rests with you. You must pardon me, for I have but a sorry memory for names and faces——"

"How do you happen here?" I blurted out in my astonishment.

Again he surveyed me with that uncertain, questioning, glance of his.

"I might ask you the same, sir," he said, after a

moment's silence. "But I prefer to answer your question. I sailed from Blackwall in the *Discovery*, with Captain Ratcliffe, on this excellent adventure; but when and where have we met?"

"Never until this moment," I said. "Yet, unless I am grievously mistaken, I have seen you before."

Instantly his look changed, and his black eyes seemed to read me through and through.

"Where, may I ask?" he said at length, and slowly.

"It was by the merest chance, in Paul's churchyard, where you had stopped a gentleman—a Captain Maxwell," I said.

"I remember that meeting; yes, I remember that;" and he drew in his breath sharply.

"You were pleased to thrust me out of your way as you left the church," I said, laughing. "And to ask me where were my eyes. I had not time then to say that they were not in the back of my head."

"I remember that, too, now you speak of it, and I can only ask you to pardon my quick temper, but I was in haste——"

"To overtake your friend," I filled in.

The stranger's brows contracted, and I could see his lips twitch.

"Did it so impress you?" he asked coldly. He added, "I take it, you are of our goodly band that the right worshipful London Company is sending forth to gather riches?"

"Yes."

"To what ship do you belong?" he asked.

"The *Susan Constant*."

"Then, sir, who the devil is this Captain John Smith that Mr. Wingfield and Captain Ratcliffe are charging with mutiny and an uncivil wish to murder the Council as

soon as it shall be known, that he may set himself up as King of Virginia?"

"'Tis false!" I cried.

But the stranger smiled at me. Whatever his first emotion had been, it was now succeeded by a sense of quiet amusement, as I could see.

"King John Smith, or Emperor John Smith! Lord, sir, what labour for fame to make that palatable to tongue and ear."

"What else do they say?" I asked.

"Nothing beyond this, and is it not enough?"

"If true."

"As to the truth of it, there be better judges than I. But Wingfield and his friends have decided on John Smith's death; and if you choose you may walk a little way with me down the shore, and you will see at this very moment where they are building a gallows for worthy Master Smith's own private use!"

Half doubting his words, I went with the man a hundred paces, which brought us about a point of land overlooking a small enclosed basin or harbour. Here were a number of boats from our little fleet drawn up on the shelving beach, and near at hand some men were busy setting the trunks of two stout trees in the earth.

"Do you doubt now that they are providing for King Smith's entertainment?" said my guide drily.

But I made him no answer, the important thing seeming to me to get aboard the ship as speedily as possible, and warn my friend of his danger. I turned and ran back along the shore; when I was near enough, calling to Emory and Cassen to join me, and in a twinkling we had the boat launched and were rowing toward the ship. As I tugged at the oar I found space to tell my companions of what I had heard, and with my own eyes seen.

"Unless I am much mistaken, it is one thing to build a gallows for Captain Smith and another to lead him under it," said Emory, chuckling. "Wingfield will be handsomely spoilt if he attempts it."

But when we came to the *Susan Constant* we saw alongside the barge which Wingfield and his friends were wont to use in passing to and fro between the island and the ship. We wasted no time, but sprang aboard and made our way into the great cabin, which was filled with the chiefest members of Wingfield's following.

Among these were John Martin, George Kendall, and Captain Ratcliffe, master of the *Discovery*, all of whom were Smith's most inveterate enemies.

As for John Smith himself, he was apparently the least concerned of any man present. He was seated on the edge of his bunk, before which was drawn his sea chest as a barrier; on it lay his sword and two pistols, by which I judged he had received warning from some source. He had evidently been reading,—it was Mr. Hunt's Bible, that he much admired because of its fine large print, which made it very pleasant to the eye,—and now, with a finger between the leaves to mark his place, he rested it carelessly on his knee.

Wingfield was speaking as we entered the cabin. Smith was wanted ashore; there was ample proof of his conspiracy, one of his confederates had confessed; and the sense of the Company was that he should be dealt with accordingly.

"I am told you have erected a gallows for me—a wasted labour, for you cannot persuade me to use it; for which reason I shall not go ashore," said Smith, without bitterness, but in a tone of finality that left no doubt but that he meant no less than he said.

"Drag him forth!" cried Wingfield, and he glanced

first at Martin and Kendall, and then at Ratcliffe; but these heroes were biting their nails in some confusion.

"Look, you!" roared Smith of a sudden in a terrible voice. "Who tries that would better first make his peace with God—for as God lives, I'll lay him by the heels!"

And now he stood erect, put down his book, and turning back the sleeve of his doublet, snatched up his sword. There was an awkward pause.

"I think," it was Ratcliffe who at length spoke. "I think if Captain Smith will pledge his word that he will return to England when the ships go back, that the London Council may deal with him, it will not be needful for us to go to extremes in his case——"

"No!" roared Smith.

"In consideration of our present mercy to him——"

"I have had an honourable share in this venture, and it will pass the power of men to send me back to London against my will and pleasure," swore Smith, with a great oath.

"We will concede something to Captain Smith's youth. Captain Ratcliffe has spoken wisely and dispassionately," said Wingfield.

"My youth!" snapped Smith, who did not know how to meet, but resented an attack delivered in this wise, which hinted at inexperience.

But now we heard the splash of oars alongside, and a moment later Bartholomew Gosnold, Mr. Hunt, our preacher, and George Percy, brother to the Earl of Northumberland, entered the cabin, and I gave a sigh of relief; for they were all friends of Smith's, the men of importance and influence in the Company.

Yet Smith wanted neither backers nor authority, but laid down the law in his own fashion.

"I'll be tried and vindicated—if justice is done me—

when we land in Virginia! Until then, with all instructions sealed, I stand on an equal footing with the other movers in this adventure. There is no power to arrest me, nor to try me, until we know of whom the Council consists. I have submitted to arrest to show all that I do not set myself above discipline; it is another matter when you talk of taking me ashore for a drumhead court martial! But if any one, or two—aye, or half a dozen of your number think to move me out of this ship against my will, let them step forth like men—and God protect the right!”

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WITH the discrediting of Smith, on whom I had put most reliance, I saw my own future darken; I knew I should not be allowed to return to England with Newport if Wingfield and his friends could prevent it, if only because they wished to affront Smith, he having already laid my case before them.

I was to know the very dregs of despair. I could see nothing before me but long months of waiting; and what of Mary in the meantime? If Captain Maxwell had durst deal with me in the desperate fashion he had, what chance had she at his hands? However, of one thing I was sure, and got no small comfort from the thought; my disappearance had ere this taken my father to London to make search for me, and he would be certain to see Mary, unless the Maxwells had removed her; but I put the idea from me.

Now as the voyage was approaching an end I began those letters which I proposed should go back with Captain Newport when he sailed. For my father's use I made a very careful and detailed statement of the manner in which I had become a member of the Virginia Company, that he might submit it to the London Council, when I hoped they would act at once, and favourably, to my interests, for if the matter dragged I knew there was the chance that Newport would have sailed again for Virginia.

Smith said that probably my father would have no great difficulty in dealing with the Council if he agreed to meet the charges the London Company had been put to

in sending me out. Wishing to aid me where he could, he gave me letters for him to show Sir George Somers and Mr. Richard Hackluyt, who were his especial friends in the Council, in which he set forth the manner of my arrival on shipboard.

"If it were but possible for us to change places, Faraday, what contentment it would bring," said he. "For here are Wingfield and his friends who are moving heaven and earth to be rid of me, even attempting to scare me by talk of gallows and hanging—though I'll not take one backward step! And here are you who desire nothing so much as to return to England; and yet we cannot bring it about."

Men pass now from the Old World to the New and give scarce any thought to the hazard of it; but consider, at the time of the London Company's adventuring, it was a wholly different matter. Then in good truth it was a journey into the unknown, to an unexplored region where there were neither towns nor homes nor cultivated lands, but all a wilderness; no man could say how vast, or where it had its beginning and where its ending. Dangers we faced of which we knew naught; aye, and later there was to come sickness and pitiful hardship the like of which I daresay no body of Englishmen had ever been called upon to experience until that time.

After we left the Virgin Isles murmurs began to be heard, and these grew louder from day to day until they had mounted into a chorus of discontent. I know not how it got about, but presently it was being said on all sides that we were altogether out of our reckoning. At first this was denied, for it was feared that to own to the truth of it would precipitate a mutiny, but John Smith told me privately that Captain Newport had admitted to him that three days past we should have sighted land. I think it

was the morning of the day he told me this that Captain Ratcliffe, boarding us, proposed to Newport that we bear up helm and return to England.

It was now nearing the end of April, and the success of the venture seemed to hang in the balance. I do not question it, if they had not lacked for a leader there were enough disaffected men among the worst sort in our company to have compelled the action Captain Ratcliffe proposed; but in this extremity the sky became overcast, and swiftly out of the south the worst storm we had yet encountered descended upon us. So great were the waves, we momentarily expected to be overwhelmed by them; nor were any of our company allowed on the deck because of the seas that continually broke over the ship. For part of a day and all of one night we drove northward under bare poles, but as the dawn broke the wind laid somewhat, while out of the tossed and ragged clouds the great warm drops of rain began to patter sparsely on the deck; and then above the torment of the wind in our rigging we heard the cry of:

“Land—ho!”

It was raised by the watch in the fore part of the ship. This took those of us who had not succumbed to sea sickness during the night in haste to the deck. I own that though I was a most unwilling member of the company, yet I felt the beat of my heart quicken, since it was not in the nature of man to be wholly dead to the inspiration of that moment. As we crouched for shelter in the lee of the roundhouse, I heard good Mr. Hunt, our preacher, say:

“Now God be praised, who has led us safely across the trackless deep!”

And truly, the wind from the hollow of his hand had dealt more fairly with us than the seamanship of our

captains, since it had brought us to the end of our long quest. Yet look as we might, we could discern nothing that to our eyes had the appearance of land; but presently a narrow streak seemed to fix itself immovably on the horizon's rim, it grew up above the crests of the racing seas and close under the ragged edges of the wind-driven clouds; and as we looked we saw the seas break in a fine white line that stretched away in the distance, until it was lost on the curving line of the shore.

One by one our company had been gathering on deck. He was sick, indeed, who kept his bunk now. And as we stood lining the bulwark, the great drops of rain beat on our hands and faces. We saw the long white line of the surf widen, while the shore took shape against the sky. Then of a sudden we caught the warm sweet odours of the earth in springtime, and a mighty shout went up from our company to salute the land.

There opened before us a huge bay, of which the land we had first sighted was the southern and eastern boundary; this we afterward named Cape Henry, in honour of the Prince of Wales.

The nearer we came to it, the fairer that new world seemed to our ship-weary company.

"It's perfection itself!" cried John Smith, at my elbow, with a deep intake of his breath. "If your heart was only with us, Farraday." He rested his hand on my shoulder. "For who can desire more content, that has small means or only his merits to advance his fortunes, than to tread and plant that ground he has purchased by the hazard of his life? If he have but the taste and virtue of magnanimity, what to such a mind can be of greater moment than planting and building a foundation for his posterity, got from the rude earth by God's blessing and his own industry, without perjury to any?"

At mid-day we fetched an anchorage in the lee of the cape. The sick were healed by this time, and the last murmur of discontent had passed away, but there was a mighty hunger for the land that was not to be denied; and shortly after we came to anchor, boats filled with men from all three of the ships started in to the shore, and some thirty of our number made a landing.

At first they were content to keep near the water's edge, but very soon they plunged into the woods and were lost to sight, though we could hear their shouts as they went forward. Suddenly, however, I was aware of a difference; the hulloing became more eager, ringing out with a keen note of terror. Then four men, who half supported, half carried a fifth, broke from the woods and ran toward the boats, and as they ran, still others appeared at different points, all running for the boats.

I heard Smith calling me, and made my way quickly to the fore part of the ship where he and the master gunner, with the aid of two or three sailors, were preparing to charge a demi-culverin.

"Lend a hand here, Farraday. Did you see them come tumbling out of the woods?" He was about equally divided between apprehension and mirth.

In a moment we had the gun charged and it only remained to find our target. I saw four naked savages armed with bows and arrows skulking in the tall beach grass; these had put our thirty to flight.

"It passes all," said Smith, when I had pointed them out to him. "Fire away, master gunner—but we might have saved our round shot."

Yet the noise of the piece acted like magic on those four crouching savages, for I doubt if they had ever before heard such a sound except when their god Okee spoke in the thunders. First they fell flat on their faces as the solid

shot whistled high above their heads, and then springing to their feet, they plunged into the forest, and we saw no more of them. When the boats came alongside we learned that two of our company had been sore wounded with arrows. This was our welcome to Virginia.

The storm ere this had quite blown itself out, the sun blazing down upon us from a cloudless sky; and as it sank, long shafts of golden light shot across the wide reaches of the great bay; then the passing splendour faded from sky and water, the lush verdure of the shore darkened by imperceptible degrees, and within its purple shadow the long ripple came white and ghostlike to the yellow sands. There was no drifting smoke to mark the place of hut or habitation, nor was there any sound of bell, bleat of sheep, or call of distant voices to disturb the deep twilight calm that wrapped this new land in the mystery of its wide silence.

Sea weary and ship weary, our company lounged about the deck without speech, drinking in the odours of the warm earth which a gentle wind, that was no more than a murmur in our rigging, brought to us. Presently black darkness stole over land and water, and with its swift approach came a multitude of night sounds. We heard the hoot of owls, the call of the whip-poor-will, the cry of the loon, the booming of the great frogs in their morasses, and saw against the blackness of the shore the myriad light of fire-flies.

That night to the great cabin Newport brought the sealed box which the London Council had intrusted to his keeping. This box he placed on the table under the lanthorn, but before opening it he made a short address, saying in substance how we had every reason to be thankful that we had not wholly given up to despair during those days when we were searching in vain for land, since

to have returned to England then would have discredited us forever in the eyes of our countrymen; for although it was true we had not yet found the Island of Roanoke, we had come into a very pleasant country, where by God's grace we might reasonably hope to establish a prosperous colony. This being so, it was now time we should know fully the desires of the London Company.

With this he broke its seal and opened the box; and there was instantly a mighty craning of necks. Captain Newport took up the first paper on which his hands fell, glanced at it, and then said:

"For the Virginia Council, seven gentlemen are named. With your permission I will read their names: Edward Wingfield, John Martin, Bartholomew Gosnold, John Ratcliffe, George Kendall, Christopher Newport, and John Smith."

At each name there was a burst of applause, for our company was in a fine humour that night with the voyage happily ended; though even so, there must have been some jealousies and heart burnings, since out of some two and fifty gentlemen adventurers but seven had been given place. I who could not hope for office was especially pleased that John Smith had been named for the Council, and I was the first to take him by the hand.

"It's a bitter medicine for Master Wingfield," said he in a whisper as he gripped my fingers. "But I expected no less, Farraday, and, God willing, I may be of some use to you yet."

"What further do our instructions say, Captain Newport?"

It was Edward Wingfield who put the question.

"Why, sir, from this Council of seven will be chosen a president, who will hold office for one year. He, with the Council, will govern the colony; but matters of weight will

be examined into by a jury, final judgment being rendered by the Council, the president having two votes."

This as I remember it was the sum and substance of the instructions that bore upon the government of our company; not that the sealed box yielded nothing more—there was an elaborate set of rules whereby we were informed how we were to prosecute our discoveries, and how we were to carry ourselves in relation to the Indians.

Nor did the London Council lose sight of the fact that the prime purpose of the planting of the colony was to gather treasure, and we were especially commanded to be ever intent on the discovery of the South Sea as a certain and sure way to vast stores both of gold and silver. Therefore, if we found any considerable rivers that bore toward the northwest, we were not to fail to ascend them, since in the opinion of the Council the other sea lay somewhere in that direction. We were to learn also if the river had its rise in the mountains or was fed by lakes; they judging that should it be found to come from a lake, it was probable that on the other side of this lake would be another river, rendering the passage to the western ocean both practical and easy.

This talk of South Seas and treasure was vastly agreeable to our gentlemen, and the moment Captain Newport had finished with his papers there arose a babel of voices, and I presently heard Mr. Watton, our surgeon, say:

"'Tis a well-known fact that certain Indians told Sir Walter Raleigh's captains that the headwaters of the Roanoke River were so near the western ocean that seas driven by a strong wind sometimes fell over into the stream, and that it was salt both at its mouth and source. Now those Indians either told the truth, or else they were the greatest liars out of Christendom."

Newport, who had drawn aside with Wingfield and Rat-

cliffe, stood forth again, and, calling for silence, announced that the Council would not be sworn in until the actual disembarkment of the company had taken place. He gave as a reason that it was deemed wisest there should be no conflict of authority on shipboard.

"We mariners are, I own, touchy of our rights, but our authority stops with the shore, and there we will leave the honourable Council to take it up," said he in conclusion.

Whereat our company cheered him, for we were in such fine spirits that nothing would have seemed amiss that he could have said. But I glanced over my shoulder at Smith. He was tugging at his beard and frowning. Catching my eye and leaning forward he said:

"They mean to ruin me past all doubt, Farraday, but never fear—once ashore I shall demand to be given my place in the Council; if that is refused me because of the charges that have been brought against me, I will demand a trial——"

"With the Council to pass judgment on you!" I said.

"Even so, I don't despair of securing justice for myself."

The next day our ships proceeded up the bay until we had come to a splendid sheltered harbour, where we anchored off a tongue of land which we named Point Comfort. The day following we came to the mouth of a noble river called Powhatan by the Indians. It was quickly decided if a suitable place for our colony could be found, it should be established on the banks of this river, since its great size and general trend indicated that it must have its headwaters somewhere in the region of the South Sea.

One of the boats was launched and Captain Newport and a company went up the Powhatan a distance of some miles, returning after nightfall with the report that they

had seen no savages, though they had discovered a great canoe on the shore, above forty feet long, and cunningly fashioned out of the trunk of a single tree; they had also found oysters in great abundance, in many of which were small pearls.

This continued to be the manner of our advance, the land opening up its wonders to us. Each day our parties went forth to explore, whilst as the wind and tide would allow, our ships ascended the river of which we were daily gaining a more perfect knowledge. Ere this our people had met with straggling bands of savages, who seemed well disposed toward us, especially when we made them trifling presents of beads and trinkets, which had value in their eyes as being new and strange.

At last on the thirteenth of May, when we had progressed some forty miles from the mouth of the Powhatan, we finally brought our ships to the shore of a low peninsula, in six fathoms of water, mooring them to the trees that stood on the bank. Here our settlement was to be made. Some of the company was landed that day, and our Council was hastily sworn in, and Wingfield elected president. I had remained on shipboard with Smith to oversee the raising of some of our stores from the hold, and the first we knew of all this was when we heard the cheers of the Wingfield faction; for the tricksters had made careful choice of those who were first to land; but we had a full account of their dirty politics from Captain Gosnold.

The next day, with trumpets sounding, drums beating, and flags flying, the entire company was landed and marched up the shore to the spot chosen for the planting of our little settlement, already named James Town in honour of the king's most excellent majesty. Now began long days of toil for us under that warm Virginia sun.

There were trees to be felled so that we might have open ground on which to pitch our tents, gardens were to be dug and planted, timber was to be got ready in the shape of clapboard and wainscoat with which to relade the ships; and all this while a guard was to be kept about the men at work, since none could tell how the savages would take this spoil we were making of their wilderness.

After those long months of enforced idling on ship-board the sudden need of continued effort sent us each night to our hard beds on the ground with blistered hands and aching muscles, where we slept like dead men until the beating of the drum called us forth, sore and stiff, to begin a new day. From dawn until dark for three days together one heard nothing but the sound of axes and the crashing of mighty trees, mingled with the groaning of the sweating fellows who dragged up our stores from the ship; for we had neither horses nor cattle, so that all things had to be done by the main strength of men.

But the fourth day, being Sunday, brought us a respite from our heavy toil. As I heard the morning drumbeat, I quitted my tent. Few of the company were yet astir. The dew was glistening on the trampled grass and the birds sang in every tree; our campfires of the night before sent thin wisps of blue smoke high into the clear air. From beyond the woods came the murmur of the placid river, and from the ships moored to the shore the voices of the sailors as they went about their work of swabbing down the decks.

One by one our company stole from their tents and shelters, the watch was changed, and our fires rekindled. We idled over our breakfast until it was time to hear good Master Hunt preach. An old sail had been stretched between two trees, and here we gathered about him that first Sunday on shore; our soldiers with their muskets in their

hands, and our gentlemen captains with their swords girt at their sides and their armour on their backs.

After he had read the Lesson, Mr. Hunt stood up with the soft wind blowing about him and the great trees rustling overhead.

“My text this morning is from the first chapter of Joshua, the ninth verse: ‘Be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.’”

CHAPTER TWELVE

UNDER Captain Kendall's direction a barrier in the form of a half circle, with the open side toward the river, had been built from the lopped boughs of trees; it was only fit to make an Indian bonfire withal, but it progressed no further than this, for we had outlasted all mistrust of the savages, who came silently from their fastnesses in the great forest, to gaze in stoic wonder at our labours. Some brought game or fish to barter with us, welcome additions to our somewhat meagre stores.

Improving the opportunity thus offered him, godly Mr. Hunt strove to gain a mastery of their language, that he might discourse to this poor naked people of the true religion, to an understanding of which he would fain have led them, for I doubt if in all the world there were anywhere greater heathens. Our captains, too, were desirous of perfecting themselves in the speech of the Indians, for gold and South Seas ever haunted their dreams, and they judged that the savages must have knowledge of both. Thus we were divided betwixt love of God and mammon, with the greater inclination toward mammon.

Had there been naught for me to think of but the work in hand, I would have found those first weeks on shore pleasant enough, no doubt, since never was there such a land, so perfect and unspoilt by man's tenanting, with its profusion of flowers, its great and splendid trees, against which it seemed a sin almost to lift our axes. In this pleasant paradise our president, Edward Wingfield, soon relaxed the discipline that held the company together, the

armed guards were withdrawn from about the camp, whilst our work was allowed to languish. I confess, in those mild days of early summer it was hard to believe we should ever have need for more than our tents and shelters of boughs.

Our gentlemen captains, with few exceptions, set the remainder of us a poor example of industry, for we were not colonists in the sense men should be who go out to settle a new land, nor yet were we a military company; there was too little authority and too much equality; but the greatest folly of all was the Council's choice of a president. Master Wingfield was naught but a merchant adventurer eager for gain, and so conscious of his unfitness for his post that he put aside the dignity of his office in his desire to achieve an easy popularity with the worst element in our company.

It was this element, with its canker of greed, which was loudest in the complaint that, since we had come to search for gold in a land of treasure, it was a hurt to all our interests that any stop should be put to our efforts in that direction. Without hindrance from the president or his Council, many quitted their necessary toil to steal off and try the river sands for the precious metal, and by night around our campfires there was endless discussion as to the true and infallible method of locating treasure. Especially were there murmurs when it was found that the sands yielded nothing but sore backs and aching arms, that we had not been more forward in our efforts to discover the South Sea.

The humour of company and Council could not have been in more complete accord on this point, for Wingfield was avaricious, John Martin was bitten in the same spot, whilst Ratcliffe and Kendall were broken gentlemen who looked to the adventure to mend their fortunes. I was not

surprised after hearing all our campfire talk when John Smith informed me he was ordered by the Council to join Captain Newport and some twenty others in an attempt to explore the river Powhatan to its source.

"You see, Farraday, though I am still a prisoner, our thrifty president is evidently not disposed to let me eat the bread of idleness, which, unless he push forward the work of planting, may be the only bread we will any of us have to eat presently."

Smith had led the way to the shore, and we were pacing the sands at the water's edge. Through the skirting fringe of untouched timber and within the limits of Captain Kendall's famous barrier of lopped branches glowed the hot ruddy light of our campfires, and as the flames leaped into the night, the white walls of our tents showed against the utter blackness of the forest beyond. Our company was making merry; the sound of their voices floated out to us; now it was a burst of laughter or a snatch of some song that came to our ears.

"They are well pleased that something is to be done to their liking," I said, thinking of the quest that was to begin on the morrow.

"It were wiser to complete our foundation here, Farraday, before we go off in search of treasure; but those wrong-headed asses in the Council will not hear to it that we need look for aught from the Indians but friendship. So be it, but do you have a care of yourself, Dick, or I may not find you here when I return—if it is God's pleasure that I should return."

"No doubt our ordnance should be up where we could get some use of it in case of need," I agreed.

"If I had the managing of it, that would be the first thing done. I would put every man at work getting out palisades, and sinking them; but what use of talking?"

he added with weary contempt, and he fell to tugging at his beard, a way he had when disturbed.

"You do not put much faith, then, in their talk of treasure?" I said; and I would have had it otherwise, for though I was in Virginia much against my will, and only desired to return to England, yet if forced to remain I was willing to profit by it.

"Not a groat's worth, Farraday. Whatever is to come out of Virginia will be the fruit of hard toil. Save for a few copper ornaments, what metals have the savages? Now where Jack Spaniard found gold it was in use amongst the Indians; but even so, this is a fair land for man to dwell in—a fair land."

At break of day on the morrow the boats, with Newport in command, started on their way up the river, and our cheers followed them as they put off from the shore. As I turned back from the water's edge I found myself touching elbows with the tall fellow who had attacked Maxwell that day in Paul's churchyard and whose name I had learned was Marshall.

"I give you good-morning, Master Farraday," said he, smiling at me in that dry way of his. "Your friend, King Smith, seems a lusty, pushing gentleman; for though he is under arrest, off he goes on this May-day junketting, when all our mouths are watering for the chance."

But though his lips were smiling, Marshall looked at me out of deep, sad eyes, with no shadow of mirth in them even.

"They may find us our Eldorado," I said.

"Mayhap," he assented indifferently. He held out a blistered hand. "The first harvest of the rude earth, Master Farraday, but I doubt not you can match it." With this he seemed about to quit my side, but I kept pace with him.

"Sir, I have wished to ask you a question these many days," I began, doing my best to advance boldly to the matter I had in mind, rather than to beat about the bush at which I am not good.

Instantly, however, I was aware of a change in Marshall's manner; he gave me a shy, furtive glance.

"Undoubtedly that is your privilege," he said drily.

"What do you know of Captain Maxwell?" I asked with as much boldness as I could muster.

His face darkened under its tan.

"Still harping on that, Master Farraday?" he said at length.

"Yes——"

"Then I will tell you, I know nothing of Captain Maxwell that concerns anyone but myself. Is that plain to you?"

I felt my face colour as I bit my lips, but I had no intention of parting with my temper. The fact that he would tell me nothing of what I desired to know, only fed my curiosity. Here was some pretty mystery, and I was determined to have it out of him yet.

"I have reason——" I began.

"Doubtless, Master Farraday," and he smiled at me with his lips.

"It cannot affect you," I began again, for an admirable stubbornness is the birthright of all the Farradays.

"I am the best judge of that," said Marshall quietly.

"By your leave I will go forward."

And pushing past me, without more ado he entered the camp.

By this time Newport's two ships were reladen for the homeward passage. The pinnace was to remain with us—which brought us to a fine state of mutiny and disorder, as I shall presently have occasion to relate—but the

Susan Constant and the *Goodspeed*, having taken the bulk of their cargo, were anchored a hundred yards off the shore, there to await the return of Newport. Now that the ships rode deep again, our captains put every man who could dig or chop at work clearing the land for gardens.

In particular were we seeking to get our corn ground dug over and planted, a burdensome toil, since it must all be done by hand. Not without grumbling was this work pushed forward, for Wingfield had his friends on whom discipline rested lightly enough, forsooth, whilst those of us who found no favour in the sight of that sleek merchant were weighted down with a double share of toil. Indeed, I doubt if ever such a small company of men was so riddled with the rottenness of favouritism as ours.

Added to this the summer's heat was making itself felt, and the inspiration we had all experienced during the first days ashore had worn away; we were knowing only the drag of our unaccustomed labour. With this the situation, it was no wonder the sullen campfire talk verged rapidly toward mutiny. Some were heard to say openly that we would fare better living with the savages themselves than at James Town with these sluggard masters of ours; which was sorry talk for Englishmen, but showed the temper of a good part of our company.

John Smith had been gone toward the South Sea a matter of some ten days when a thing chanced that showed how much we had stood in need of a wiser rule than Wingfield's. I was at work in our cornfield with thirty or forty of our people; some were digging stumps, others were preparing the ground for seed, and still others planting. At my side was George Cassen, a very good kind of fellow, and a friend of Smith's. We had been chopping away in silence for some little while, but at length Cassen paused, his face streaming with sweat, and glanced about him.

"Lord, Farraday, we have wrought a pretty havoc here!" said he.

He spoke true, for where so late a wilderness of goodly trees had been, there was naught now but blackened stumps; while on the wooded boundaries of our little field was the heaped-up litter of branches which we had dragged thither. We had paused at the far side of the field and close within the cool margin of the wood; already our first planting of corn was pushing up from the rich earth, so that the eye might follow the nodding green rows to the very edge of Captain Kendall's famous defence and our cluster of tents, which were here and there overtopped by a house of logs, some so far advanced that men were at work roofing them with the thatch. Beyond was the forest growth again, which extended down to the river; through its openings I caught glimpses of the hulls and spars of Newport's ships, and the distant blue of the southern shore.

Cassen's glance followed mine, he nodded toward the ships.

"They will soon be returning to England," said he.

But I made no answer to this. I knew it only too well, for what would I not have given to know that I might sail on the *Susan Constant*.

"I tell you this, Farraday, our president would fain have Captain Smith sail with Newport; the captain's a bad dream to the worthy merchant. I doubt not he fears Smith will end by slitting his throat for him!"

I glanced toward Cassen, rather puzzled by his speech.

"How do you know what Wingfield wants or fears?" I asked.

"Look you here, Farraday, they are going to send Smith back to England by fair means or foul—'tis all one. Wingfield is in such fear of him that he cannot speak his name even without going white with his terror."

"Of that I know something," I said.

"The whole Council is against him, saving only Captain Gosnold. Kendall flies into a fury if one but mentions his name in his hearing; he calls him a Gascon and a beggar—it passes all, the names he finds for him; he says he is a liar who has had dreams of adventure and believes them true."

"Of that I know, too," I said again. "And when John Smith hears of their free speech, I doubt not he will lay Master Kendall and some others by the heels."

But I did not know that Christian soldier; for later when the lives of his most inveterate detractors were at his mercy, he spared them with a true charity at which I can only marvel, for his surface temper was somewhat hasty and choleric.

"Yesterday Wingfield had me in his tent—you never saw such condescension, Farraday! He patted me on the back and called me Thomas—my name is George, but no matter, it was the spirit of the thing—and then he would have it that I drink with him a glass of right Canary."

"And what then?" I asked.

"Why, he put to me some questions about you, Farraday."

"About me?" and I was mightily astonished.

"Yes, he would have me tell him if you were not anxious to return to England; then he would know if you were not in Captain Smith's confidence, and I said you were a deal together. He said that he had observed that, too; and all this time he was plucking at his beard as if he had something on his mind, and yet durst not be quite frank. Next he asked me if I thought you could be induced to take a certain stand for the good of the Company, especially if you were assured that you would be granted permission to return to England when Captain Newport sails; and

then he blurted out the whole thing. It will be intimated to you very presently that if you will swear to it that Captain Smith has imparted to you his design of seizing on this country, murdering the Council, and setting himself up for king, it will be money in your pocket and a speedy return to England; otherwise you will find you have made yourself powerful enemies who will keep you here till the last moment."

"Are you his messenger?" I asked sternly.

"God forbid, Farraday," cried Cassen hastily. "But that trading knave would have had me for one of his coached witnesses against Smith; he offered to line my pockets well, but I desire only to warn you that they will come at you with this proposal at the last moment, when the ships are about to sail and when the temptation will be strongest."

"But speaking only for yourself, what did you tell Wingfield?" I demanded.

"Why, having a mind to serve Captain Smith, who is worth some score of those idlers in the Council, I feigned to consider the proposal. I said I would at once begin negotiations with you, which gained me more Canary and more condescension, and then in came Kendall, who took an eager hand in the plotting."

"And will you tell this to Smith when he returns?" I questioned eagerly.

"Aye, and more than you have yet heard. The way in which Kendall spit his venom on Captain Smith was enough to make an honest man blush! But do you see the trick of it, Farraday? They send the captain off, and then they prepare this trap for him."

At this, the black villainy of their plotting was made plain to me. They had sent Smith away, as Cassen said, that they might at their leisure scheme for his undoing.

I doubted not there were men of the very worst sort in our company, who for a bribe would swear their own souls into perdition, but fortunately in going to Cassen Wingfield seemed likely to perish in his own pitfall for the once.

As I looked beyond Cassen, who was standing facing me with his back to the wooded boundary of our field, I found my glance suddenly arrested by a pair of black piercing eyes; no more did I see than just those glittering, baleful eyes, that were peering at me fixedly from out a clump of low growing bushes not half a score of paces distant; whether it was animal or man I could not for the moment have told, but as I looked I caught rather than saw, the stealthy movement of a naked body, a shaven crown with its single tuft of hair was raised somewhat, and then before I could speak or cry out, there arose in the silence the most hideous and appalling uproar by which my ears had ever been assailed.

"The savages!" Cassen cried as he turned and bounded away.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

WHERE but a moment before the afternoon sun had sent its shifting lights and shadows down all the empty ways of the silent forest, my eyes, now dwelling fascinated, saw in every direction the naked, gliding forms of the savages, hideous with paint; on every hand I caught the soft pattering of their moccasined feet on the brown floor of the wood, and then mingling with the wild chorus of yells came the twang of bow strings and the arrow flight. Truly their stalking of us must have been rare sport.

I came quickly to my senses, and turning fled after Cassen; and as I ran I saw from end to end of the cornfield our men casting aside their hoes as they betook themselves to flight. As Cassen and I had been standing at the further extremity of the field, we were among the very last to enter the bounds of the camp.

The hideous yells continued, but from us there came no answering shout as we stood along Captain Kendall's brush fence, some clutching axes and hoes, but far the greater number empty handed. Here and there a man with an arrow sticking from thigh or shoulder, in the intervals of his groaning and cursing, could be heard calling for the surgeon to come and ease him. At this juncture Captain Kendall and President Wingfield came running from the latter's quarters. I heard Wingfield cry out:

"Arms! Arms!" And he turned him about and ran for the storehouse with full a score of men at his heels.

Now it passes belief, but our masters had grown into such happy conceit with the savages that the muskets had

been taken from us and stored away in their chests, with what idea God only knows, while for our heavy ordnance, not a single piece had been mounted. When Wingfield got to the storehouse he found the door locked; then he bethought him in his panic that the key was at his quarters, so bidding the soldiers await his return he posted off to fetch it.

Meantime the savages advanced boldly from the wood and we began to draw back toward the tents and cabins for shelter, whereat Captain Kendall, mighty bold with drink, dashed in amongst us and bade us stand our ground, swearing at us roundly the while for scurvy cowards and such like; indeed such was his spirit he would have used the flat of his sword to enforce his commands, but Marshall seized him by the arm, and I heard him growl:

“If our silly president had not taken our muskets we would stand; but what can we do without weapons?”

All this while we were being scourged with arrows, and as my comrades dropped about me groaning and crying out, there was such cursing of the Council as I had not thought could come from the lips of men.

I expected to hear the roar of the great guns from the shipping, but the long moments passed and no signs came from the sailors to show that they were conscious of our danger, nor were we joined again by those who had followed Wingfield. They had been compelled to force their way into the storehouse, aye, and serve the arm chests in the same rough fashion, too; it was all most happily arranged for our utter ruin.

Some began now to help away the wounded to a better shelter, and these did not come back. I took my eyes off the savages and stole a glance about me; there were not a score of men left behind the barrier, the rest had vanished, I suppose with the thought of getting arms or warning the

sailors of our great peril. I was certain I saw the end of our colony, when suddenly at my back I heard a lusty cheering and the splash of oars.

My first idea was that the sailors had landed a party; but praised be God, it was Newport and John Smith returning; and ere the boat's keel touched the sands Smith sprang out and, with ten sturdy fellows as impatient as himself at his heels, came charging through the camp to be joined by the men from the storehouse with muskets in their hands and eager to give those saucy savages a proper fright and to pay them, too, for the blows we had taken.

But this was not to be, for ere they had come within striking distance of the Indians our tardy sailors on the *Susan Constant* sent a bar shot from one of their culverins which struck down a great limb from an oak tree we had left standing in our cornfield, and under which the savages were gathering. This instantly sent them back into the woods in full flight, and that was the end of the attack, for their terror of our ordnance was beyond all words.

Smith would have followed them straightway, for he was no laggard in these matters, having as honest a love for blows and battle as any man; but our president, with the colour coming back into his cheeks and his palsy of fear leaving him, ordered him to stand fast.

"And why, sir?" demanded Smith in that lofty way he had when his blood was stirred.

"'Tis commanded by the London Council that we do not make war on the savages."

"Neither are we to let them murder us!" retorted Smith, very loud.

"Happily no great hurt has been done us," returned Wingfield.

"I tell you, sir, 'tis no more than Christian charity to

show these savages what our strength is, that they may know for all time a flint tipped arrow is a poor weapon beside musket balls," said Smith, tugging at his beard. But Wingfield turned on his heel and without further speech walked away.

In spite of what the president said, when we came to take stock of the situation we found the savages had wrought a sad havoc amongst our company. One of our boys was dead, and seventeen men wounded; some so spoilt that they were long confined to their beds; and ere they recovered from their hurts the fever found and slew them, even as the arrows of the savages had not been able to do.

When our excitement had somewhat abated, I got Smith aside with Cassen, who told him of his meeting with Wingfield, to which he listened very quietly, for if ever a man knew when to fly into a fury and when to be calm, Smith was that man. By the time Cassen had finished his tale I could see that my friend had resolved on a course of action.

"To-night the Council will meet," said he, "and go before it I will, even if I have to force my way thither sword in hand. In all I have been under arrest some thirteen weeks, and I weary of it. If they still refuse me my seat in the Council I shall demand a trial, and then, honest Master Cassen, I will bring such discomfiture to that sleek intriguer, with your good help, as he merits. I tell you, sirs, there must be some discipline brought into the conduct of our enterprise or the savages will be the conclusion of us all. Wingfield has not only proved himself a fool, but a mischievous fool; whilst Kendall and Ratcliffe are men of weak judgment in danger, and less industry in peace; as for Gosnold, his honesty and good sense goes for naught in such company, for he is out-voted."

And then he shook us both by the hand, and said no more of the matter, instead telling us of what had been accomplished by Newport, which was little enough.

They had ascended the River Powhatan until they came to a town called by the same name, one of the chief places in those parts, for here was the dwelling of the Indian emperor whose name likewise was Powhatan. Beyond this point they had not been able to go far in their boats, by reason of the rocks and rapids; so a little beyond the Indian town they had made a landing and had set up a cross, naming the river the James or King's River, as was proper, since our gracious lord was the first Christian prince to send soldiers thither. But neither gold nor South Sea had they found, and from what they could gather from the savages, Smith judged that the other ocean lay to the westward many days' journey. Newport, however, thought differently, believing if they had a boat so built that it could be taken apart and carried around the falls on men's shoulders, the South Sea might still be reached by water with no great toil or hazard.

John Smith appeared before the Council that night and claimed his right to be present at its deliberations, which was at once denied by Wingfield and Kendall. Those old charges of mutiny and conspiracy were bandied about, which somewhat galled my friend, who, after telling them a few plain truths, swore that since he was denied his rights, they should try him and either prove his guilt or allow him to establish his innocence.

Here Newport and Ratcliffe took a hand in the debate. They urged on him that it were wiser he should return to England, and place his case before the London Council to deal with; for if he were tried and found guilty in Virginia it would utterly discredit him with the company, and it might pass the power of the Council to restrain our

people if they chose to wreak a rough justice on him for his plotting. Whereat Smith said very quietly, as I was afterward told by Captain Gosnold, that if it were true he had plotted to kill the Council and set himself up for king, no vengeance that men could take would be too swift or terrible—let him have his trial.

On this there was something of an uproar, and Wingfield, no doubt feeling sure of honest Master Cassen, swore with great oaths that he would no longer be a buckler to shield Captain Smith from the consequences of his own folly and wickedness; that since our charter gave us the right, he should be brought to trial on the morrow; and with this he dismissed the Council.

Never did men witness a more miserable fiasco than John Smith's trial. For when Cassen was brought forward to give his testimony touching that notable design of Smith's to murder the Council and make himself king of Virginia, he told a vastly different tale than Wingfield had expected to hear come from his lips, making the fraud and venom of the president's charges seem so clear that Captain Kendall, who had the managing of him on the witness stand, would fain, I doubt not, have rather had the devil himself to deal with than that blunt soldier. In vain he sought to stay his steady flow of words, but honest Cassen talked straight on, having it in mind to ease himself once and for all of everything he knew concerning the matter in hand; whilst our company first laughed and then began to jeer, remembering presently how it was that John Smith had never set himself up for better than the meanest, that he had always had an eye to the care of the sick, that he had been the first man ashore, and the foremost to our rescue the day previous, and that of our own knowledge we knew naught of unkindness or incivility from him. So as we thought of these things the laughter died out

whilst the jeers continued, and I could see Wingfield sucking his lips in dumb misery of the situation. Even his friends drew away from him. They had no mind to ruin themselves in his behalf since he had so bungled in his plotting.

The upshot of the whole evil business was that it was adjudged that Smith should take his place in the Council and that Wingfield should pay him damages to the value of two hundred pounds in such goods as he had in hand; these goods Smith afterward directed should be thrown into the common store, for he ever carried a prince's heart in a beggar's purse.

It was plain that the welfare of our little band depended chiefly upon our union, since we were in an unknown land exposed to the attacks of hostile natives, and Mr. Hunt did his part in bringing peace to the councils of our leaders; he went from one to the other with words of right import, saying how they should love and forgive their enemies. His arguments prevailed, since there were none who did not love him because of his exceeding goodness, and by the very next Sunday he had so far mended the strife of our factions that we all received the Holy Communion together. And, indeed, it did seem that the spirit of peace had come into our midst, for on Monday there appeared an embassy from the savages with word that their Emperor Powhatan desired to live in friendship with us.

Captain Newport sailed for England the middle of June. He carried my letters—aye, and my heart, too, for I would have made any sacrifice to be allowed to go with him. From the beach I watched the ships drop down the river with the tide and a light wind that barely sufficed to keep their sails full; and presently they passed about a bend in the shore and from my sight.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

WE fell on evil times after Newport left us, for while the ships remained at anchor off our island we had carried on a brisk trade with the sailors, who were willing to barter a share of their bread and meat for furs and sassafras roots, the latter a commodity that fetched a fabulous price in England, the belief being that it had rare virtue in physic for the cure of many diseases.

But now that the ships were gone, there was nothing but the common kettle into which went every man's allowance, a half pint of wheat and as much barley—this, boiled in river water, was our daily mess. At first we had helped out this ration with fish, oysters, and what game we could kill or could induce the Indians to bring us; but presently these supplies failed, the Indians no longer came to the fort, our store of cured sturgeon was consumed, and the other fish which earlier in the season had come in abundance into our river now disappeared.

One hot noon time, perhaps a fortnight after Newport's sailing, as I waited near the cook's fire for my mess, Smith, coming up, said:

"If we were but as free from all other sins as we are from gluttony, Farraday, we might be canonised for saints."

His face had a haggard look, such a look as comes from incessant toil and scanty food. His eyes were sunk deep in his head, but there was no dimming of the indomitable light that lived in their clear depths.

"Why do you stare at me, man?" he asked.

"I was wondering if I had the same look," I said.

"We are all having it, only do you notice, Farraday, our worthy president and some few of his friends are holding their own to admiration—eh, that will bear looking into?"

"He has some small remains of conscience left," I said.

"How so?"

"Why, he never meddles with the contents of the common kettle," I made answer.

"No man in his senses would, unless forced to do it or starve." He stretched forth his arms in a sudden weary gesture. "What would I not give for a cold drink! I am never free of the taste of the tepid river water; and our wounded—but what good to speak of it."

"Or the weevil in our wheat," I said.

"True, what use to complain? Wayfaring men must expect to go hungry in the strange places of the world whither their unrest takes them," said he.

He watched me as I got my bowlful of the mess which we called porridge, and some other things not decent to set down in writing, then he seated himself at my side on the log which was at once my chair and table; as I added salt to the contents of my bowl he steadied it with his hand, and my fingers touched his. I found his skin was dry and hot beyond what was natural.

"It's the heat," he said, understanding the look I gave him.

"Pray God it is nothing worse," I cried.

But here there joined us Thomas Watton, our surgeon; he glanced from one to the other of us.

"Not eating, Captain Smith?" said he.

"Nay, the victual has been fried in the ship's hold till it has lost all taste," rejoined Smith.

"Tut, man, what is this I hear? Has the stoutest stomach in all James Town revolted at last? Give me your hand, for I would feel your pulse. I thought so—a touch of fever. Have I not told you, Captain Smith, to keep clear of the hot sun by day and the dew by night? Now to your cabin, and there you stay until I give you leave to quit it!"

Somewhat to my surprise, John Smith rose slowly from the log, making no protest.

"But who will see that the palisades are driven, and that they finish mounting the ordnance?"

"What will that matter to you in the next world?" demanded the surgeon.

"Why, little enough, truly," said Smith, and he followed the surgeon off toward his quarters.

I think he was one of the very first stricken down; and small wonder, for his toil for the common good had been unceasing.

This was but the beginning of such misery and sickness that I can scarce bring myself to write of it after the lapse of these years even. John Smith had scarce taken to his bed when he fell into a raging fever, and speedily became so weak that he could neither go nor stand. Within the space of a day or two the same dread malady struck down Thomas Studly—our treasurer, Captain Gosnold, and Anthony his brother. The first to die, however, was John Asbie, at the beginning of August, and in the very hot weather. He was one of those the savages had spoilt with arrows, and while he was still weak from his wounds the fever came and made an end of him.

By now the long hot days of summer were full upon us. Such days as they were, with our heavy work of driving the palisades about the fort, nursing the sick, and caring for our growing crops. Those who were able, toiled from

early until late, with that merciless sun beating down upon them. But we went fewer to our work each morning, until at last there were scarcely ten wholly well men left in James Town.

By God's assistance I preserved my health, though my body shrunk until it no longer filled doublet or breeches. In good truth I learned what hunger is. I, who, as I remembered to my shame, was not above complaining of our Meg if there were fewer than three kinds of meat for dinner.

In the fort, what had been the goodly shapes of men, starved and scourged by the fever to the likeness of gaunt shadows, dragged themselves in and out of their tents and huts, or dropped down in the shade of the palisades; most terrible to see, and to hear, too, when they cried aloud for cold water with which to quench their thirst, since there was naught to give them but the tepid water from the river, which was filled with a green slime at low tide, and bitter with the taste of salt when the tide was at its full.

After the long days came the longer nights, without breath of wind, a hot moon that looked like burnished copper in the heavens, the booming of frogs from the swamps, the droning of insects, and above all the groaning of the sick in every corner of the fort. And then when the morning broke there were the rounds to be made, when we went from tent to tent, from hut to hut, to drag forth for burial those who had died over night. We buried them in one corner of the fort without marking the graves, lest the savages might learn the number of those that had perished. Ere things came to this pass, Captain Gosnold died, to the great sorrow of us all, and we buried him honourably, having all our ordnance fired off, together with many volleys of small shot.

John Smith was sick all though August. He might per-

haps have recovered a measure of his strength more speedily had he taken greater care of himself; but each time he got a little the mastery of his disorder, his great energy and the need there was caused him to join us at our work of grave digging and guard duty, the only two labours we were now able to perform, being so sadly reduced in numbers. This sooner or later would send him back to his quarters and under the surgeon's care; yet such was his spirit that he kept his bed never more than a day or two at a time; indeed, I know not how much blood Master Watton took from him in those weeks, but he owned himself it was enough to have killed a well man.

I have said I was not sick that terrible summer, but to say I was wholly well would be wide of the mark, and as I dragged myself about the fort I was conscious of a growing rage for our president, who had taken such good care of himself that the fever had passed him by to strike down better men. In spite of the dire necessity, he kept so close a watch on his private stores that no sick man of the company benefited by them, for he would neither give nor sell; only Captain Kendall and some few others no better than he got taste of them. Yet, as John Smith truly said, it was no small dishonour to be counted Wingfield's friend. For consider, with men dying all about him from sheer starvation, this precious knave with his boon companions could be heard carousing night after night; I wonder now that for very madness we did not cut their throats for them!

This while I had been thrown much with the tall fellow Marshall, for he was one of those who succumbed neither to the river water nor the starving; but for all we toiled side by side, I could not say that I had made any progress toward a better acquaintance; he desired, and would admit of no intimacy, holding resolutely aloof from it. I specu-

lated much concerning him, for it was plain he was far above the rank in which he served the Company; that despite the evil fortune which had brought him to his present pass, he was a gentleman born and bred.

But though the fever had spared him through the very hottest days of July and August, he at last fell a victim to it. One morning early in September, as I was going about the fort, I was stopped by our surgeon.

"Marshall has taken to his bed," said he. "And just as I would have sworn we had reached the end of the fever."

I had thought this, too, for there had not been a death in almost a week, and many of the sick were convalescing.

"I will see if he wants for aught," I said, and turned back from the gate.

Marshall's hut was hard by the president's quarters, but I had never set foot inside it. The door stood open now, and pausing before it I saw that Marshall was stretched out on his bed. As my shadow fell across his threshold he rose to his elbow.

"Oh, it's you, Farraday," he said as he dropped back.

"Do you stand in any need?" I asked, entering the place.

"I thank you, no," he answered civilly, but briefly.

I marvelled at the great neatness of that small interior. The dirt floor was nicely swept, and Marshall had fashioned a bed for himself by planting a stout post near the centre of his hut, this gave support to two poles reaching to chinks in the logs, and upon this rude frame was stretched a heavy canvas; there was also a stool that he had made, and a table of clapboards, and opposite his bed stood his chest.

"You are well housed," I said, for the neatness of the place made it wonderfully pleasant after the foul hovels

in which most of our men were content to live; aye, and to die, too, for the matter of that.

"This kennel will do till a better offers," he said quietly, then after a moment's silence he asked: "How fares his good majesty, Smith?" for he would not give over his jesting about my friend.

"Better; the fever has all but left him," I said.

"Good. For he is a fellow of parts, and since Gosnold is dead, the only one in the Council worth more than a spoilt fig."

"You are not alone in that opinion."

"I daresay."

"I will come again," I said, preparing to take my leave of him.

"As you wish, Mr. Farraday," but he seemed only desirous to be rid of me.

Coming back at the noon hour I found him no better, so I brought him his portion from the common kettle, with such extra dainties as I could beg for him. I know not why I had the feeling for him I surely had, unless it was that he seemed a link binding me to the Maxwells, and so to Mary. At nightfall I found him somewhat worse; he was tossing to and fro on his bed with his eyes like coals of fire. He hardly knew of my presence, for I heard him mutter over and over as he tossed:

"What a life—God, what a life!"

It was plain he was too sick to be left entirely alone, someone must needs stay by his side to give him the physic Mr. Watton had left, so I constituted myself his nurse; but he was past paying much heed to me, his wandering fancy being busy with concerns in which I had no part.

I sat down by the door of the hut. Early as it was our camp was very still, if one excepted an occasional burst

of laughter which came from the open door of Wingfield's quarters hard by, where he and his companions were holding their revels. I marvelled that they durst for very fear make this showing of indifference to the suffering that was everywhere, that had emptied half the tents and huts.

I heard the watch at the gate changed, by which I knew that it was nine of the clock. I fell to wondering what was doing that very hour at the other side of the world, which brought me quick to thoughts of my mother and father and Mary. I prayed to God that my letters might have come safely into their hands by this time. I wondered if Betty and Tom Preston had made a match of it. Presently I was conscious that there was absolute silence about me, save only for the night sounds and the splash of the tide. Stepping from the hut I saw that Wingfield's cabin stood in darkness. I thought that lewd company was keeping wondrous early hours forsooth, and walked toward the cabin, having in mind to know if they had really dispersed. I found the door closed, which was singular enough on such a night. Now the back of President Wingfield's cabin rested close against the palisades, and was toward the river, and as I stood speculating on what that shut door meant, for I was sure no one had come from the cabin since the carousal ended, I thought I heard sound of voices in the direction of the river. Listening intently for a moment, all doubt was dispelled on this point; the distant murmur of voices reached my ears past all peradventure.

I crossed to the great gate, where I found George Casen on duty. I gave him good-evening and asked if any had gone forth; he told me no, and after a word or two with him I walked back to Wingfield's quarters in a mighty state of mystification.

Our fort was four square. The great gate, roughly speaking, looked toward the north and the causeway we

used in passing over to the mainland; we had builded away from the gate on either hand, so that the major number of our tents and huts were at the east and west sides of the fort; on the south side there was only Marshall's hut, the president's quarters, the storehouse, and a space where we purposed, when our strength should be somewhat recruited, to build a church for good Mr. Hunt.

I went about the three sides of Wingfield's cabin, which was rather larger than any other we had yet built, and between it and the storehouse I chanced to observe where two of the palisades had been lifted from the ground, leaving a narrow gap in the wall through which a man of my bulk even might squeeze without much difficulty. Mightily interested now, I pushed my way through the opening and went toward the river, coming out upon the shore a little below the spot where the pinnacle lay moored to the trees. Glancing in this direction, I espied a light shining from her cabin windows.

It flashed upon me all in an instant what was afoot! Wingfield purposed to steal the pinnacle and return to England. In one sense we would be well rid of him and his friends at any price, but I doubted not that to make the attempt practical they must rob the general store, taking even the little that remained of our corn to help them out. Truly this was a notable villainy that I had unearthed; yet it was well-nigh beyond belief when I stopped to soberly think of it, that Englishmen would abandon and even rob the sick and dying of their only hope of life. I could feel my blood boil with deep hatred for these heartless wretches who were so much worse than the very savages.

I stole noiselessly along the shore toward the pinnacle, and went as close as I felt it safe to venture, for I did not know but they had posted a watch on deck. There was

much talk going forward in the cabin, almost every word of which was plain to me. The first I heard was this:

"How stands the tide now, Archer?" It was Wingfield who spoke.

"It's at the full. Man, if we but had a breath of wind to help us away from these cursed shores!"

"What do you think, gentlemen?" It was Wingfield again. "Shall we make the attempt to-night?"

"Perforce we must," said another voice I recognised as Kendall's. "We cannot wait for them to discover that the stores are missing; that will breed a pretty riot."

"When the tide turns, we will slip our moorings, taking the barge and shallop with us so they cannot follow, no matter what tricks the wind plays us; the only danger is that we may be left within reach of the guns of the fort."

"No fear of that!" cried Archer.

"Then, gentlemen, we will drink a last farewell to Virginia."

I waited to hear no more, but treading soft and with my heart hot for those villains, turned back toward the fort. As I neared the gap they had made by overthrowing the palisades, I mended my pace to a run, which quickly brought me into John Smith's presence, for I burst in upon him without so much as a by your leave, to find him in undress but busy writing in his journal by the light of a single sputtering candle.

"What now, Farraday?" said he.

The words came out of me in a fashion to astonish myself even, for my indignation gave me a readiness of speech I had not known I was gifted with; but before I had reached a conclusion John Smith had put aside his peaceful labours and was getting into his clothes. Then as I finished, he said with one of his rare oaths.

"There will be no peace for us until I make an end of

Wingfield. I am mightily minded to let those runagate knaves trust themselves to the tide and then with our great guns sink them—but no, we need each weevil-eaten grain of corn they have stolen from us. Do you, Farraday, get together swiftly what force you can, and we will shortly board the pinnacle. Be silent, man, but be expeditious, since there is no time to lose.”

I ran from the cabin, and presently had about me some half dozen of our soldiers who were best able to keep their legs. Then we were joined by Smith, who had not waited to fully dress himself.

“Now lead the way, Farraday,” said he, after glancing over the men to determine their number and quality.

I conducted them through the gap in the palisades, with Smith close at my heels, and the rest following in single file, and the first thing those plotters knew was when we dashed aboard the pinnacle and Smith, sword in hand, appeared in their very midst.

His sudden advent bred consternation, yet they sprang nimbly enough to their feet, drawing their swords as they did so. I took stock of the numbers we had to deal with. There was Wingfield and Captain Archer, and of course, Kendall, together with a sailor who had been left with us by Newport, and two others. I found I might have named them all, only excepting the sailor, before we boarded the pinnacle, and not gone astray in a single instance.

“Down with your weapons!” roared Smith. “And every man of you ashore!”

For a moment it looked as if they had more than half a mind to try their strength with us, but they must have realised that we held them wholly at our mercy and that at a word from Smith we would have killed the half of them at least. Then Wingfield spoke with some little show of spirit:

"We have six men here, you have eight, Captain Smith; we would fain have gone without you, but so be it."

"Gone whither?" thundered Smith.

"To England. Now we offer you the chance we have made. The pinnacle is ready victualled for the voyage, in half an hour or less the tide will turn; it remains but to slip our moorings and drop down the river, leaving this fever and plague-stricken spot."

No doubt, judging Smith by himself, he really thought he could strike this bargain with him.

"What!" cried Smith, his honest blue eyes blazing. "Leave the sick to die? By God, sir, you shame me by such a proposal! I will not go—nor shall you—for I will sink the pinnacle first!"

But Wingfield turned quickly to the rest of us.

"Farraday, Cassen, Robinson—and you, Emery, will you stay here to die, when I offer you this chance of life?"

For answer we spit out curses at him, and I know not how near death he was, such was our rage with him. I think he understood then the complete frustration of his plans, and that he was forever shamed in the eyes of all honest men, for he did not speak again. Yet Kendall and Archer must bluster some to show their manhood, but John Smith quieted them by one of his hot glances.

Now, for a second time he ordered all ashore, and Wingfield, after a moment of irresolution, rose from his seat and, very white of face and shaking like one with the palsy, went from the cabin, with his gallants trailing after him.

The news of the president's attempt to steal the pinnacle reached the fort in advance of us, and as we entered the stockade we found all there in the wildest turmoil. Men half naked and so weak they were scarce able to stand were arming themselves; with what idea I could not

tell; and as we came through the great gate Wingfield and his friends were saluted by a maniacal roar from those fever and famine-stricken wretches that was ghastly to hear—and the cry went up:

“Call the Council and deal with the traitors!”

Martin and Ratcliffe were both sick, but the alarm had brought them forth with the rest, and they were hot, too, for a speedy judgment on Wingfield, though I own they were vain, empty men, little better than him they were now so forward in denouncing.

The companys' clamour that the traitors should be dealt with at once was so insistent that an extraordinary meeting of the Council was called on the spot; and as many as could crowded into Wingfield's cabin, where the Council went into session. In ten minutes' time Wingfield and Kendall were deposed from all office and Ratcliffe elected president. For further punishment, Wingfield's private stores of beef, oatmeal, strong waters, and what not, were confiscated for the general good, and he was ordered to henceforth draw his share from the common kettle. I think Wingfield had looked for a worse disciplining than this, however, for when he was brought before his judges he was utterly humbled, so that I turned my face away, for it was a shameful thing to see a man cringe and weep, with the tears running down into his beard.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

THE night was far spent when I bethought me again of Marshall, for I was in such happy conceit because of the share I had in Wingfield's overthrow that I had done a deal more talking than was necessary to the condition in life to which an evil fate had assigned me. But at last remembering the sick man, I tore myself away from the seductions of my sudden popularity and hastened to his cabin.

I found him in a sort of delirium, as I judged, for he seemed wholly unconscious of my presence; even when I gave him water to drink he stared up into my face, his eyes all unseeing, while detached sentences came from his lips; but now he spoke altogether in French, of which I knew not one word.

It was the grey of morning when he fell into his first sleep. He ceased the restless turning of his head from side to side on his hard pillow, and no longer muttered nor raved. I deemed now that I might with safety leave him, but first sought to make more easy for his head the roll of clothing that served him for a pillow, and which had become disarranged by his constant turning. As I did this, very gently, so as not to disturb him, some small object slipped through my fingers and fell to the floor. Stooping I picked it up. It proved to be a miniature painted on ivory and set about with precious stones; quite involuntarily and not pausing to consider, I stepped to the door and brought the miniature to the light. It was a woman's face that was painted on the ivory, and at

first sight of that face my heart stopped beating and a cry escaped my lips, for the face was Mary's.

I would have staked my life on this, but presently as I gazed I realised that it was, and was not, Mary. There were the same dark eyes, the same clear skin and delicately chiseled features, but there was a difference, too. I do not know how long I stood with the morning light flashing on the pictured face, surrounded by its circle of blazing gems, but a sudden movement on the part of the sick man brought me back to earth—Virginia—James Town—the hut.

I turned from the door with a mighty sinking of the heart, Marshall had roused to consciousness, and there was no mistaking the look in those burning eyes that were fixed upon me.

"Damn you, sir!" said he in a choking voice. "Who are you, and what are you—but what need to ask—I could have known this would be your chance! Put that down; it cannot concern you!"

For his glance was now on the picture in my hand.

No honest man is good for much in such an emergency, and I stammered something about the picture having fallen from his pillow; but he only laughed with that wild look that I had seen in his eyes that day in Paul's churchyard.

"You spy!" he cried with such contempt in his tone that I felt my cheeks blaze.

But I made a step forward and put the circle of ivory in his open palm. There ensued a long silence. I wished to vindicate myself in his sight, but realised that his judgment of me was fixed and unalterable, and based on reasons of which I knew nothing, save only that they existed. Yet I swiftly passed beyond this desire to make myself understood. That picture I doubted not could

answer a question asked many times since I had come to love Mary. At last I said slowly:

"Who is it?"

"Who has set you to spy upon me?" he demanded by way of answer.

"No one—I do not even know what you mean."

He laughed.

"Had I a proper use of myself I would shake the truth out of you!"

"There is nothing you can know beyond what I have already told you," I insisted.

"Mr. Farraday, I will believe that at my leisure."

And again we came to a silence. I could not keep my eyes off the miniature in his open hand; at that distance the face had lost the look that was not Mary's.

"Tell me, who are you?" I asked at length, and unconsciously I approached his bedside.

"Man—man, if you have pity, leave me in peace!" he cried with sudden weary passion.

"Not yet—not until I have told you one thing—you must know——"

But he broke in upon me:

"I wish to know nothing; I wish to be left in peace."

"Tell me first whose is that picture?" I said.

"What does it matter to you?" he demanded.

"Much—why do you doubt me? The picture fell from your pillow; I only picked it up to replace it, but the face was so like Mary's——" I began.

He looked at me in astonishment.

"Mary—Mary—aye, it is Mary," I heard him say, his voice a gasping whisper.

I reached out and took the miniature from him ere he knew my purpose. As I brought it again to the light my memory travelled swiftly back to that evening on the

moor when my father and I met the great coach of the strangers. I saw again the cloaked and booted forms of Captain Maxwell and the French gentleman, but clearer than all else I saw the Captain's kinswoman as she was brought into our parlour.

"'Tis Madame Barras!" I cried.

The effect on Marshall was instantaneous; it got him from his bed, gaunt and fever-racked as he was, and brought him staggering toward me.

"In God's name, who are you?" he whispered. He seized me roughly, and his long brown fingers dug deep into my shoulders as he clung to me for support. "What do you know of Madame Barras?"

But on the moment, and before I could answer him, I felt his sudden strength spend itself, his hold on me relaxed, and had I not caught him in my arms he must surely have fallen to the floor.

"Who are you, Farraday—answer me that in all honesty?" he said, as I allowed him to sink down on his bed.

"I am neither more nor less than I seem," I made answer.

"But you called her by name—yet you could never have seen her—she has been dead these many years. God pity me——"

"If that be Madame Barras, she died under my father's roof in the north of England," I said as I put the miniature down.

He looked at me incredulously; he seemed to be struggling with his fixed doubt of me.

"She came thither with Captain Maxwell; they were on their way to Scotland," I explained.

"Take up the miniature and look again!" he cried hoarsely.

I did so.

"Hold it nearer the light!" he commanded. Then after a moment: "Are you sure, Farraday?"

"Yes; sure beyond all peradventure."

"Yet you were naught but a child," he said.

"Aye, but it is the very likeness of Mary."

"Mary—what Mary, boy?"

"Our Mary—the child that was born under my father's roof."

"But the child died, too!" he said.

"No!" I cried.

"No?" he repeated; and so deep was his mistrust of me that I saw he was not yet convinced that I spoke the truth.

"The child grew up in my father's house. 'Twas the only home she had, and my mother was the only mother she ever knew. This continued up to a year ago, when Captain Maxwell came and took her from us——"

"And where did he take her?" he demanded.

"To London; she had been there not many weeks that day I saw you stop Captain Maxwell in Paul's churchyard," I said.

"My God!" and he gave a great cry and fell back on his bed in a swoon.

He lay so not above a minute, however, in spite of his great weakness; then he was himself again, and his fierce black eyes opened to fix themselves on me with such a look as might read a man's soul.

"This is no trick, Farraday?" he pleaded. "Do you swear that what you tell me is true?"

"Yes, as I live it's true," I answered.

"God help you if you lie!" he said, for his belief in me came and went; but in the end there was always his doubt.

Now I seated myself and fell to telling what I knew of

Madame Barras, starting with that meeting with Captain Maxwell and the French gentleman out on the moor.

"De Courcy!" he muttered, nodding.

"I never heard his name; it was never spoken that I recall."

"Go on!" he said impatiently.

I told how Maxwell made their needs known to my father, and of Madame Barras' appearance when she entered the vicarage. I had held Marshall's eye up to this point, but now he put his hands before his face. I told of the messenger having been despatched for the surgeon, and of the birth of Madame Barras' child that night, and then of the young mother's death on the morrow. Never once did Marshall interrupt me. He kept his lean brown hands before his face, lest I see there the record of emotion it was his wish no man should look upon.

I paused when I had got so far, and at first he made no sign to indicate that he was aware of my silence or my presence even. He half reclined on his bed, with his back against the wall of the hut, and with his face still buried in his hands; but at last a whisper came from him:

"And her child?" he said.

So I told of Mary's girlhood in my father's house, of that mingled care and indifference, as it had seemed to us, which her friends had always shown for her. I told of her beauty and goodness, and the very telling of it made my heart leap with a sudden sweet intoxication. God knows I ever knew how incomparable my darling was! I only withheld the fact of my love for her; and this from a very proper feeling of humbleness, for I had painted such a paragon—but even so, my poor speech did her scant justice—that I doubted if he would believe me if I adventured the statement that she would have married me had not the very thorough cudgelling I had received

at the hands of a pair of footpads changed the whole aspect of my fortunes.

He had taken his hands from before his face and was regarding me fixedly, and I could see by the way in which he hung upon my words that while my account of Madame Barras had moved him to infinite sorrow, what I had found to say of Mary kindled a look of hope in his sunken eyes. When at last I had finished he reached out his hand toward me.

"I have come to believe in you, Farraday. At another time you shall know why I doubted you; let it suffice now that I ask your pardon for my uncivil speech," he said.

"One question?" as I took his hand.

He nodded his assent.

"Who was Madame Barras?" I asked.

"The woman I loved—my wife," he answered hoarsely.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

I GIVE you good-morning, gentlemen!" It was Master Watton speaking from the doorway. He glanced first at Marshall, and then at me, for I doubt not our faces must have told plainly that we were labouring under no common excitement. Then passing to the bedside, he felt of Marshall's pulse and shook his head.

"Tut, Farraday, you are like to talk Marshall into his grave; so be off, whilst I draw a little blood from him" said he.

I went forth into the hot morning, walking like one in a dream, and never doubting what I had just heard. Marshall was my Mary's father. I could see now that she had something of his look; this shadowy likeness had baffled me from the very first. But I had yet to penetrate the reason for Marshall's mistrust of me—why he had held so stubbornly to the conviction that I was seeking to spy upon him; here I could believe was some pretty mystery. Of one thing I was certain, however; at my first opportunity I would tell him of my love for Mary. This resolution formed, I turned back out of my hut, whither I had gone to weigh the matter, to forage for my breakfast, with an appetite sharpened by my long vigil. Whilst I was thus engaged I met with John Smith, who drew me aside.

"I have been taking stock of our provisions, Farraday; even with Wingfield's private stores, which are under guard aboard the pinnace, there is not food enough, such as it is, to last us ten days longer; and here are we with some two-score men in all stages of the fever."

I exclaimed at this news.

"Keep it to yourself, Farraday, for none will be helped by knowing how near starvation we are," said he.

"What do you purpose to do?" I asked, for I knew if aught was to be done for our deliverance, he was the man most likely to do it.

"You cannot persuade me to starve, Farraday; of that you can rest assured. I am just from seeing Martin and Ratcliffe, and they agree that I shall go with some five or six men and search the country for food and trade. Do you prepare for the enterprise. We take the shallop—Emery is seeing that she is made ready."

But ere I joined the little company I sought out Mr. Hunt and begged he would have a special care of Marshall until my return; and then with my musket and plenty of powder and ball and match I hurried down to the river, where I found John Smith had already preceded me.

With him were five of our soldiers, truly a scanty handful for such an expedition when one considered our situation, and that there were none of us who did not show the effect either of famine or fever. But John Smith was such a host in himself that we never stopped to consider our weakness or the cruel strength of the savages, for the greater the labour he undertook the greater always his spirit.

We took no supplies other than the trinkets we expected to trade in, by which it was apparent we were committed to hunger in the event of our failure to deal with the shifty Virginia pagans.

At mid-day we managed to get both sea crabs and oysters, which somewhat stayed us, and late in the afternoon we came on a party of the savages abroad in their canoes. These we approached as near as they would allow, with every demonstration of friendship, seeking to

make them understand by signs and such few words of their language as we knew, that we desired to trade with them for corn. For answer these naked and unchristian wretches mocked our famine-stricken appearance and derided us as men likely to starve. What with hunger and our toil at the oars, their insolence moved us to such rage that had not Smith restrained us we would have let fly with our muskets at them.

That night we went supperless; we durst not even go ashore to make our camp, but after we had ceased rowing got what rest we could, watching by turns as the tide drifted us down toward the river's mouth, for there had been no wind since early in the afternoon. With the first streak of dawn I was awake; the shallop was now at anchor, the tide having turned, and my comrades, save only Cassen, who was on watch, were asleep in the bottom of the boat. With their ragged beards, which had not known the barber's care in weeks, their sunken cheeks and hollow eyes, and their skins sallow or burnt to a brick-red by that summer's fierce sun, they looked ripe for any desperate hazard toward which Smith might lead them.

They came awake even as I looked at them; our breakfast was the river water, with which we had filled two casks before leaving James Town; then we took up our oars again.

"You shall fare better when dinner-time comes," said Smith.

By mid-morning we were forty miles from James Town and in the vicinity of the Indian town near Point Comfort. As the great bay opened up before us, I bethought me of that day, only five short months past, when our ships rode at anchor off the point; of the high enthusiasm, the brave talk of treasure, and spoil, and South Seas. I

conceive that no men had ever had such splendid dreams matched to so cruel an awakening. A full half of our company was dead, having perished most wretchedly, and those of us who remained were likely to follow them unless we got help from the savages.

Seeing smoke rising from above the trees, Smith directed the helmsman to run in toward the shore, and as we came close to the land we made out a great number of savages, who no doubt had been watching the shallop since break of day. When sufficiently near we began a parley with them, exposing such trinkets as we had brought to trade. For answer they would hold out a handful of corn or a piece of bread, indicating by signs they would give no more than that for our guns and swords, which galled us not a little.

"They must needs be otherwise moved," said Smith presently, with a shake of his head. "Put down your oars, men, and take up your muskets! Give them a volley, but let it be well over their heads—for the London Council is very tender of this people."

The effect was magical, for when the smoke cleared away we saw that the shore was deserted. Smith ordered us to load, and then we seized our oars again and drove the boat ashore and made a landing.

"Who has a mind to dine to-day, follow me!" cried Smith, and forward we went.

A little back from the shore we found their town and a great quantity of new corn, as well as other provisions, which, hungry as we were, Smith would not allow us to touch; but of the savages we saw no sign, they having fled before us as we advanced. Yet presently as we stood there, mighty hungry and grumbling somewhat at our Captain's honesty, which set but illy on empty stomachs, we heard that hideous uproar which was no longer strange

to our ears, and by which we knew the savages were preparing to attack us.

We forgot our hunger and fell to fingering our muskets and casting side glances at Smith, who was busy watching the approach of the savages. They came at us to the number of seventy, perhaps, armed with bows and arrows and hideously painted, some black, some red, some white, and some a mixture of all these colours, and looking like so many fiends. Borne in front of them was their god Okee, a poor enough idol made of skins stuffed with moss, and hung about with chains and copper.

"Now," cried Smith, "we will show these people how truly great is our God, since He has given muskets to those who serve Him, instead of flint-tipped arrows!"

And he ordered us to give them another volley, but not over their heads, which would have been to throw our lives away. This brought several to the ground, but worse scared than hurt, as it developed afterward. Yet such was the success of our fire that the bearers of Okee were amongst those sprawling on the ground. They had dropped their idol, too, of which we straightway made a prize. As for those we had wounded, they twisted clear of us before we could lay hands on them.

The savages seeing we did not advance on them, sent one of their number to treat with us. Smith made this envoy understand that we desired only to trade, and if six would come unarmed and freight our boat with corn, we would return to them their god, and moreover give them beads, copper wire, and hatchets, and would beside be friends to them.

To this they agreed, and not only did they freight our boat with corn, but they made us presents of venison, turkeys, and wild fowl. Indeed, they grew into such love with us when we surrendered their god that as we went to

the shore to embark the whole village followed in a kind of triumph, singing and dancing and waving green branches.

It took what remained of that day and all the following night to get up the river to James Town, and when we reached the fort and the people saw our success, they began to realise how much better it was to show some little enterprise and live, than give way to despair and perish; but most important of all, John Smith was our leader from that day forth, though Ratcliffe remained president in name at least.

I had hurried off to see Marshall the moment I landed, but found him very sick and in a pitiful state of weakness; whether it was the fever or the shock of what I had told him, I do not know. I would have remained to care for him, but John Smith had such a mind to make use of me in the various expeditions he undertook, that in the succeeding two weeks I was abroad almost continuously. By these exertions we brought in such store of provisions that hunger was banished from James Town.

It was now the end of September, and what with the cooler days and nights and the more generous fare, our people were beginning to get back their strength; and Smith set every man who was able to work; some he put to mowing, others at binding thatch, whilst still others began the building of suitable houses, which had chimneys of sticks and mud, that they might be warmed when the weather became severe.

I cannot in honesty say that these labours were taken up cheerfully; indeed, on the contrary, there was a deal of grumbling, but Smith, by good words and fair promises, accomplished wonders with our unruly colonists.

"It will require extraordinary exertion if we are to live through the winter, Farraday," he told me one night as he sat in my hut.

We had just returned from a trip up the James River, and were to go forth again on the morrow at break of day. I knew what he said was true: that our planting of corn would fall far short of what was needed.

"Yet we are replenishing our stores very rapidly in trade with the savages," I said.

"That is our only hope, and I have ordered that the pinnace be made ready for us; one successful voyage in her may answer. But to-morrow we will go up the river in the shallop, as I had planned. I tell you this thing of the worker and idler drawing their sustenance from a common store was a grave mistake of the London Council; no real foundation here will ever be made until each man benefits by his own industry. There are Wingfield and Kendall, living in disgrace, and yet they will not lift their hand to any useful work, and I durst not force them to it, since Ratcliffe and Martin will not hear of it."

"Not in such disgrace, after all, for they seem still to have their friends," I said.

At break of day on the morrow we set forth in the shallop, this being our third trading trip. It was this voyage that we made discovery of a very large and fine river which the Indians called the Chickahominy. The shallop was freighted on its banks and we started back for James Town, where we arrived after an absence of three days, and in the very nick of time, for a second plot had been hatched to run off with the pinnace, Captain Kendall being the prime mover in this fresh villainy. We found most of our company gathered at the river front when we reached the fort, the pinnace moored off the shore, and the barge in possession of the traitors, who, with arms in their hands, had publicly embarked, as they did so challenging the rest to interfere with them at their mortal peril. As we beached the shallop our comrades

pressed about us, calling on Smith to recover the pinnace. Even as they spoke with him, we heard the smart flapping of the pinnace's main-sail as it was run up, for Kendall, aware of Smith's return, deemed it not wise to tarry longer in his neighbourhood.

Looking toward the little vessel, I saw that with the main-sail hoisted they were now preparing to weigh anchor, the slack of the cable was coming in dripping and foul with river grass. We could even hear Captain Kendall shouting commands and encouragement to his followers. I wondered what Smith would have us do: if he would attempt to board the pinnace, in which event I foresaw that some of us were like to come off with broken heads, if nothing worse.

But John Smith had no intention of risking aught; for he called to us to follow him, and entering the fort, led the way quickly to the platform that accommodated such of our culverins as were meant to play upon the shipping.

"We will drop a shot in front of those gentlemen!" said Smith, blowing on his match. "And if that does not suffice to bring them to their senses we will sink them. Lay hold!"

The slack of the cable was all in and the pinnace was splashing merrily through the short seas as she was hauled up toward the anchor, whilst her mainsail continued to flap in the fresh wind with a noise that was like the report of a pistol.

I saw the shank of the anchor come from the water, and then our culverin roared out its protest, and a solid shot plunged into the water not ten yards from the pinnace. It bred consternation, for the anchor was let go in a hurry, and I saw the cable play itself out.

"Eh?" said Smith, chuckling. "That has given them something to think on beside their voyage to England!

Load again, and get another piece ready, for they must not get past our guns—they shall all go to the bottom first!”

At my side I heard Lieutenant Percy, he who was brother to the Earl of Northumberland, murmur:

“Excellent, Mr. Smith!”

“Give them another shot!” cried Smith. “I must see that sail come down!”

And again one of the culverins roared and another five-pound shot sailed across the bows of the little vessel and splashed into the water beyond. An instant later the main-sail came down with a rush, whereat we all cheered. At the same moment the pinnace displayed a white flag at her peak.

“A parley, Captain Smith!” cried Percy.

But Smith shook his head.

“No parley with mutineers. Fire again, and see if you cannot drop your shot a little closer, master gunner!”

“I’ll singe their beards,” said the gunner, as he squinted along his piece.

And indeed so excellent was his aim that this shot went not five feet from the bows of the pinnace. Almost at once we saw Kendall with his conspirators come over the side and enter the barge with greater haste than dignity. They were coming ashore, their voyage having ended ere it began.

Smith turned to Lieutenant Percy.

“Such gross rebellion as this cannot pass unnoticed; do you, sir, take a file of men and disarm those traitors and bring them hither under arrest, for I will only deal with them as broken men.” Then he turned to me. “You, Faraday, go with Cassen and Emery in the barge, and take up your quarters aboard the pinnace.”

I trailed off after Lieutenant Percy and took posses-

sion of the barge as Kendall and his following came from it. There were some threats and much cursing of Smith; and here and there a man would not yield up his musket or sword without a tussle, yet in a twinkling Lieutenant Percy's soldiers had them all disarmed.

Master Percy was a useful gentleman, as well as a soldier of some little service abroad; and now that the fever had left him, this was but the beginning of the excellent use John Smith made of him.

With my two comrades I took possession of the pinnace, but we were not relieved that afternoon, and so, when we had supped, made ready to pass the night aboard the vessel. Worn out with the labour of the three previous days, I at once dropped off into a sound sleep. There was the grey of dawn in the cabin when I was roused by someone shaking me roughly by the shoulder. It was Cassen.

"What's amiss?" I asked.

"Come on deck, Farraday," he said. And then, as I followed him, I caught the rolling of a drum.

"What does it mean?" I asked, after listening for a little space.

"God knows!" cried Cassen, shaking his head.

The drum ceased, and after a little interval of silence we heard the rattle of musketry, a single ominous volley, and I guessed the meaning of it correctly. Smith's heavy hand had fallen with crushing weight at last. There had been a court-martial, and Kendall had been found guilty of mutiny and conspiracy, and had been dealt with accordingly. But I thanked God that I had not been called upon to witness this act of justice.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN.

WITH the approach of winter the river was covered with myriads of duck, geese, and swan. He was a poor sportsman who could not kill in a day more than he could consume in a week. In addition to the wild fowl, we had now a very considerable store of corn, pumpkin, and pease; nor was there lack of fish and oysters and the flesh of deer, so that our company lived with a rude plenty, and no man hungered for his share of wholesome food.

Then with the first frosts came wonderful days, when in all the great woods one heard naught but the dropping of leaf and nut, or the footfall of some wild thing in flight.

Never was there such a land as we saw it then! with its distant purple haze, and the twang in the air, as if the winds had gathered the smoke from a thousand Indian camp-fires hid in the great remote mountains, to send it abroad over our low shore. Days when the river lay quiet between its wooded shores that blazed with the colours given by frost and sun.

It would have been mighty pleasant to idle through those days, or to wander abroad in the woods, or by the river, with musket on shoulder, giving the excuse that one designed to add to the stores; but for those of us who boasted if not a taste, at least a willingness, for industry, John Smith found tasks enough; for now Ratcliffe was a well man again and was minded to play the president. It was the old order; the favourites who did

not work, and the workers who must build and forage for the drones as well as themselves. This kept the factions hot, as one might suppose.

Smith told me that now the peril of starvation was somewhat removed, Ratcliffe and Martin were urging on him that he undertake a journey up the Chickahominy and see if it were not so that it had its headwaters in the vicinity of the South Sea.

"That ocean and their fantastical gold will yet be the ruin of all, Farraday," he told me. "They say they wonder I am not more forward in so honourable an enterprise, but I do not go from James Town until we are properly housed for the winter."

Nor could they move him from his resolution.

This while I had scarcely seen anything of Marshall, for during his long convalescence I had by design kept away from him. I was at hand did he wish to see me, and I left it for him to determine what our relations should henceforth be. But the first day he was able to be abroad he came in quest of me. I was sitting before my door cleaning my musket, and as he approached I noticed how gaunt and wasted he looked. Mr. Watton, of whom I had never neglected to enquire concerning him, had told me that few of our company had been so sick and recovered, which I could well believe.

"Come, walk apart with me, Farraday," he said, when I had asked him how he did, and he had rested himself on the stool I fetched for him.

"I doubt not you have walked far enough already," I said.

"With the help of your shoulder, Farraday, I purpose to go down by the river," he answered.

He took my arm, and we crossed in silence to the gate, and passing from the fort went slowly toward the shore.

There he seated himself on a log of driftwood, whilst I stood before him.

"You have turned mighty unsocial of late; I fear you have denied your nature," he said at length, with one of his dry smiles.

"I felt you would send for me if you desired my presence," I made answer.

He did not speak at once.

"Tell me more of her, Farraday—man, I am hungry for it!" he burst out at last.

I knew it was of Madame Barras he was thinking, and I told him again of that night when my father and I met the two gentlemen and the coach. With his chin sunk in his palms, he gazed off across the river, and I went from start to finish of my story without question from him; but when I paused, having no more to tell, I heard him mutter under his breath:

"Poor child—poor child!"

And I saw his bearded lips twitch. We were a long time without speech after that, I watching him furtively.

"And you say the babe throve?" he presently asked.

"Yes——"

"And she is now in Lady Bellesly's keeping?"

"When I quitted London, yes," I answered.

"By God, I'll mend that!" he said between his teeth.

And there was another pause, with only the ripple on the shore.

I had it on my tongue's end to tell him how I loved Mary, but judged it better to wait for a fitter opening, for I could see that he was more busy with the past than with the present.

"You have cleared up a mystery for me, Farraday, and for that I owe you thanks; but who could have

thought that the answer to all my questions would have come here in Virginia!"

And, indeed, the marvel of it had been much in my mind the past fortnight. Of a sudden he turned to me.

"From what you tell me of yourself, Farraday, I can only wonder that you should be here, with a mother and father, and a place in the world. What was it, boy? Was it some mad prank or other that made it expedient for you to leave England?" he asked.

"On the contrary, I attribute my presence here solely to Captain Maxwell's kind offices. I sailed without knowledge whither I was going, never even having heard of Virginia, or this adventure of the London Company," I said.

"You speak in riddles."

"I was shipped, well beaten, by a pair of bullies and drugged," I answered.

"You would have me think that Captain Maxwell shipped you hither?"

"Yes."

"What motive had he?"

"I think he wished to prevent my seeing Mary," I answered.

He seemed to meditate on my reply.

"I had followed her up to London," I explained.

"Do you wish me to understand that there was an agreement betwixt my daughter and you?" he asked.

"'Twould be but to state the truth," I said.

"You had passed much of your life under the same roof with her?"

"Save only when I was at school in Alford."

"And you——"

"I love her," I said simply.

For a moment he looked at me in silence, then he said:

"I might have known it."

But what his feeling was I could not determine either from his words or manner.

"Captain Maxwell had other thoughts for Mary," I said.

"How do you mean?" he asked quickly.

"He wished her to marry his nephew, the young gentleman with whom you crossed swords that day in Paul's churchyard."

"And Mary—but you have already told me that you had followed her to London."

"She will never marry Nevil Maxwell!" I said.

"By which, Farraday, you would have me think she has already given her heart elsewhere?"

"You may think that, for it is true."

"No need to ask who the favoured suitor is, for I dare swear he stands before me even now in Virginia!"

"She does me the very great honour to care for me," I answered.

"Stoutly said!" and Marshall laughed quietly.

And presently, as though unaware of my presence, he slipped from the breast of his doublet the miniature which was Madame Barras' likeness. Long and earnestly he gazed at it with a look of wistful tenderness in his sunken eyes, and then of a sudden he handed it to me.

"See, Farraday, 'twas painted in Paris when she was but eighteen. Has the child her mother's look?"

"Except that she has something of you about the eyes, I would swear it was Mary's likeness," I said.

"It was a hideous wrong that she should have died!" he muttered, crushing his hands together in a burst of feeling. "A monstrous thing, and it was their mad ambition—their foolish, senseless greed that brought this price!" He glanced up at me, forgetting perhaps that

his words were unintelligible. "Do you wonder that my whole heart has been set on killing Maxwell? I came on him that day as a man newly risen out of the grave, for he had been reported dead to me, and I had long since given up my quest of him."

I could say nothing to this, so I stood looking at the picture in my hand, and in my pleasure of it I ceased to think of the man before me until he spoke again, and then I glanced up to find his eyes fixed upon me.

"You love her, Farraday?" he said.

"Far better than my life."

"For a parson's son——" he began, but paused, and moodily stirred the beach sand with the toe of his boot.

I was beginning to understand what my father had in mind when he said it was sometimes more dangerous to know too much than too little.

"Now God send Newport!" cried Marshall out of utter silence.

"You purpose then to return with him?" I asked.

"Mr. Farraday, you will never be long in ignorance of any matter, if the mere asking of questions will bring you the desired knowledge," he said.

I bit my lip, for he was the last man with whom I would quarrel, let his speech be what it might.

"Tush, boy, I but jest—God knows, I owe you much!" he said, repenting of his incivility.

"I hope to return, too, with Newport," I said.

"Truly a man is well banished here," he muttered.

"Yet you speak confidently of your own return," I made bold to say, for this was a point on which I would willingly be enlightened.

"Before I embarked I provided for a way out in case I sickened of this enterprise," he said drily.

"Would to heaven I could have done likewise!"

"Since you were brought out by fraud—but then a soldier has few rights save to jump at the word of command, and to lay down his life perchance on some field that is forgotten ere it is won. I suited my needs in coming hither, and as I tell you, I took care to provide a way for my return to England, so it is likely that Mary may gain a father before she gets a husband." And he laughed.

But it was of this very thing I had been thinking, and I did not laugh with him. He gave me a not unkind glance.

"What is it you wish to know, Farraday?" he asked. "You have dogged me from our first meeting, or was it only my fancy?"

"No, it is true. I wished to learn from you something of Captain Maxwell."

"What did you wish to know of him?"

"If he were really Mary's kinsman?"

"Yes. What else would you have me tell you?"

"Perforce I am content," I muttered.

"Content with no knowledge at all? Nay, Farraday, you have more in mind to ask me than has yet found expression."

"One thing I need not ask, and that is if you are more than you seem?" I said.

He gave me a weary glance.

"Like many of our number here, I am of broken fortune. There is no pretty romance back of all the mystery, Farraday; only some heartaches, and not a little hazard. Mayhap it is just as well you never knew more than you know now, else you may be bitten with the same complaint that has already cost some lives that could better have been spared. Yet I have a mind to take you into my confidence, for you are the first man I have met in these many years to whom I durst open my heart."

I will not say that I desired not to hear his confidences. I did ; but I doubted how deep he would go into his history.

“ Sit down beside me, Farraday,” he said. “ You have told me your story and I will tell you mine—which is hers, too,” and he nodded toward the picture in my hand. “ But before I am done you will see that what I tell you would better be forgotten as soon as heard.”

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

I COME of a Perthshire family of the name of Stuart, but a landless branch, though we boast of our royal descent; and a barren enough honour it has proved to be, both in my father's case and my own," said Marshall, to use the name by which I knew him.

He lapsed into a moody silence for a brief instant, and then continued.

"My father was one of Mary of Scotland's train when she went abroad to her betrothal to the Dauphin of France, and he continued abroad in her service for some thirteen years. He saw his royal mistress at the height of her brief splendour, when Francis was crowned King at Rheims. Consider, Farraday, Queen of Scotland and France, with what we, her countrymen, conceived a clear right to the throne of England as well! Nay," for I was about to make some answer to this, "what use to argue that point—yet, tell me, where was the crown of England disposed in the end?"

"You will allow there is some difference betwixt Mary and Mary's son!" I cried, for I ever hated to see a man linger in the wrong when a word of mine might put him right. But Marshall only laughed.

"I have broken heads and swords over this very point, Farraday, but I can endure it better to meet opposition now; yet leave us our honest difference, we cannot all think alike. You know how she lost mother and husband all in the space of one short year; how she left France in the very splendour of her youth and beauty to return to Scotland; all this I doubt not you know."

"Yes," I said.

And I was somewhat remorseful that I had been so forward in denouncing that poor royal lady's pretensions, for, after all, who had suffered most by reason of them! I had but to bethink me of her tragic end to get my answer to that question.

Marshall's sombre speech went on.

"I have heard my father tell that they entered Edinburgh to the scraping of a three-stringed fiddle and the shrieking of bagpipes; a sorry enough pageant for one who had been Queen of France! My father took to himself a wife of the Maxwells, near Berwick, expecting to find an honourable service for his sword in his native country, for he was in high favour with his royal mistress; and when she married Darnley, who was his kinsman, he had reason to look upon his career as assured.

"But Darnley was no fit consort for Scotland's high-spirited Queen; he proved himself a weak, dissolute man. His death and the Queen's subsequent marriage to Bothwell brought my father into disfavour, for in despite of his faults, he was loyal to Darnley, and he could not court the favour of the man who had murdered him; so he took service abroad in France, where he fell into more or less evil days, since he was merely a needy soldier of fortune in a strange land, lacking powerful patrons. As I first remember it, we were living rather poorly in Paris, my father being then in the service of the Duke of Guise. Small as our means were, we kept open house, and there were always some of our countrymen more needy than ourselves residing with us; in particular, I remember a certain John Maxwell, a young cadet in my father's regiment of horse; aye, Farraday, of the same family as the Captain Maxwell whom you know, his father's brother, in fact, and a near kinsman of my mother."

He was silent, thinking deeply, as I could see by his knitted brows; then he faced me, saying:

"Before I finish I will have trusted you as I have never trusted any other."

"I shall not expect to carry any memory of what you tell me away from this spot," I said.

"You have heard how the Scottish nobles rose against Bothwell and Mary, and how they were driven from stronghold to stronghold; you know how she was seized after she had abandoned Bothwell at Carbery Hill, and how that notable ruffian fled the country?"

"Yes, I know something of what you tell me," I said.

"Following Carbery Hill, Mary was made to abdicate in favour of her son, then little more than a year old; after that she was kept a prisoner at Lochleven, though in a few months she was able to make good her escape, and soon had gathered about her a considerable army. Then came the battle of Langside, which ended so disastrously for her cause that she fled into England, hoping to secure the favour of Elizabeth. By a chance, my father had some share in those latter days of his Queen, having been despatched to Scotland by the Duke of Guise on a secret mission of some delicacy. He was even present at the battle of Langside, and commanded a body of horse there. One of my earliest memories is of my mother having news of this battle, its disaster ten times augmented, and I yet recall those long days of waiting, when she did not know whether she were wife or widow. But at last my father arrived in Paris safe and well.

"With him came young Captain Maxwell, who had taken sides with the Queen, and so perforce had found it expedient to leave Scotland in some haste; but the two men came not empty-handed. They brought with them a babe of less than a year, and its nurse; the babe was a

girl, and the Queen's child by Bothwell. In her last dire extremity Mary had turned to my father, who, though he could not brook Bothwell's villainies, had ever remained her loyal servant; confident of his devotion, she had entrusted the child to his keeping."

I suppose the look on my face told of the question that was in my mind.

"The birth of the child had been kept a profound secret, since the Queen feared for its safety—its life even, so strong was the party that had driven Bothwell from Scotland, and so little disposed would the leaders have been to let a child live that in after years might perchance have power to exact revenge for its father's overthrow; so no wonder the Queen wished the secret kept whilst her own fortunes were of such a desperate sort, yet she was but at the beginning of her long captivity which was to end only with her death."

"And the child was she whom I knew as Madame Bar-ras?" I ventured.

He nodded.

"You have guessed it, Farraday," he said, and fell to staring off across the water.

"Poor lady!" I said.

"God knows how I loved her!" he cried of a sudden out of his silence.

We neither of us spoke after that for a long time. He was busy with his memories, which I question not were both bitter and sweet; for myself, I took much joy in this knowledge of my Mary's parentage, for the Farradays of our line have lived and died, and had their joys and sorrows, betaking themselves in the end to the grave—I trust always with reasonable hope of a happy resurrection—with such modesty that they have always escaped the eye of history, whilst even the voice of contemporary fame

has had little enough to say concerning them. And here was I, a simple gentleman's son, thrown into the midst of very splendid company and had never known it; which made me think that splendid company is not so widely different from what we call the common sort, but lives and loves and suffers with the same nature. Marshall broke silence again.

"My father remained guardian of the child, and she was on the verge of womanhood when he received a command from the Queen, now fully sensible perhaps of the hopelessness of her captivity, that her daughter should enter a convent. No doubt she had wearied of the world herself, and found of how little profit its joys. But that is a knowledge each one of us must gain for himself, and when my father told me of this command of the Queen's I formed my resolution accordingly, for I had already won the love of Mary Barras, as she was known; a hasty marriage, and I had set the Queen's wish at naught.

"Mind you, Farraday, my wife knew nothing of her parentage, but supposed herself to be an orphan left in my father's care by one of his comrades, this being the fiction he and the Maxwells had prepared against the time when she should come to a natural curiosity concerning her father and mother."

There was another long pause, in which I heard the lap of the waves on the shore and the rustling of the wind amongst the brilliant foliage overhead.

"It would have been infinitely better if she had never known more than this—would to God it had been so!" And he passed a shaking hand before his face.

"Our happiness was brief enough; a few months, and I was forced to seek service in the Netherlands. I never saw her again, Farraday——"

"You left her—with whom?" I asked.

"With my father, who loved her as his own daughter; but shortly after my going away he laid down his war-worn frame—my mother had died some years before. Of my father's death I did not know until months later; but my wife was not left friendless, there were the Maxwells, uncle and nephew; the nephew you know, but I know him better, as an intriguing fool!

"Of what followed my father's death I learned from John Maxwell. His nephew was deep in those plots involving certain of the Scottish nobles, the Duke of Norfolk in England, and the Cardinal of Lorraine in France. One of his associates was the Count de Courcy, a romantic adventurer who had come under the spell of the imprisoned Queen. It was he and Maxwell who told my wife she was the daughter of Mary and Bothwell, and it was owing to their influence that she became possessed of the mad fancy to see her mother. John Maxwell did all he could to dissuade her from this project, and his opposition might have been successful had not de Courcy reappeared in Paris after a short absence in England with the news of the Queen's trial. Spurred on by this intelligence, my wife set forth, accompanied by Maxwell and de Courcy and a single serving woman.

"Her last letter was written just after her interview with the Queen at Fotheringay Castle. This letter I received from John Maxwell's hands almost a year later, when I returned to Paris from the Low Country."

He paused again, and I said naught; for I could sense that sorry homecoming of the young soldier, and his terrible anguish.

"She had returned to London, where she remained until after Mary's execution. It was then the resolution was taken to go to Scotland that her child might be born there. I know not what mad reasoning of Maxwell's and

de Courcy's brought her to this notion, but she spoke of it as being of the royal blood of Scotland, of its grandfather's great estate; this letter was written when she was on the verge of her setting forth, and I never heard aught from her again.

"I did not know where she died, where she was buried, or that her child lived, until you told me, Farraday, of these things; nor did John Maxwell know more than the letter told me, for he had broken with his nephew because of this very matter.

"I set out to find Captain Maxwell, having it in mind to hold a reckoning with him, but not until that day in Paul's churchyard did I clap eyes on the man I had come to regard as my arch enemy. He had lived in hiding, no doubt, and from an exclamation that escaped him then, I know I had been reported dead to him; so he had durst venture forth, and had brought my daughter to London; perhaps to scheme for some small portion of Bothwell's estate—I can only conjecture what his purpose is."

"And the French gentleman, de Courcy?" I asked.

"He was killed in a duel at Calais on his homecoming from England."

I wondered what Marshall's life had been during all those years, and I wondered mightily what it was that had brought him to Virginia, and why he was known by the name of Marshall when he had a better right to that of Stuart. As if he read the question in my mind, he continued:

"With no hope or purpose in life, I wandered hither and thither, taking service first with one captain and then another. Two years ago I found myself in London looking for employment and needy, with the profits of the last campaign spent. Master Farraday, though I have done evil in my life—as who has not—yet I have striven to

serve God according to the ancient faith of my fathers, which faith I believe to be the most acceptable to Him."

"I doubt not you mean you are a Catholic," I said, while secretly I bethought me of the excellent religious instruction Mary had received at my father's hands; but I said naught of this.

"A Catholic, yes, Farraday; but no need to ask in what faith my daughter has been reared," and he gave me a shrewd glance.

"As you say, no need to ask that," I made reply.

"I'll not meddle with your convictions, Farraday, but do you credit it, when I say the English Catholics had hoped for much from the accession of James? Nor had he been backward in stimulating such hopes, when by doing so he could facilitate his passage to the throne. Now, in Flanders, some ten years ago, it was my fortune to meet a very tall and desperate fellow called Guido—or Guy Fawkes. Afterward we were present together at the taking of Calais by the Archduke Albert, but I had lost track of him in the years that succeeded."

I think my face must have paled at what he told me, for he regarded me with a slow, mirthful curling of his lips.

"When I have done, Farraday, you will have knowledge such as was deemed sufficient to cause the drawing, hanging, and quartering of some half score of as honest and as Christian gentlemen as yet live in England. God knows they dared and suffered much!" he added quietly.

But I durst not trust myself to answer him, for did I not know how all England had been shaken by this gunpowder plot, of which I guessed he spoke. And still, I could only marvel at what manner of man he was himself; for I knew despite his confessed share in this popish villainy, which by the exceeding grace of God had suffered

mischance, he was held to be one of the truest men in James Town, of approved courage and discipline, and neither given to swearing, nor loose talk, nor any uncharitableness.

“In London I met with my ancient comrade, Fawkes, and through him became acquainted with Thomas Catesby, who had already suffered heavily because of his part in Essex’s rebellion; yet was he nobly minded to risk his life again in behalf of the persecuted Catholics of England. Fawkes had been brought to his notice as a brave and honest gentleman, which I can vouch he was; for if ever there lived a man of true piety, of exemplary temperance, of mild and cheerful demeanour, an enemy of brawls and disputes, and a faithful friend, my old comrade Guido Fawkes was that man—and all honour to him for his martyrdom!” he cried, as he swept off his hat.

My blood, I confess, ran cold that he should boast thus of so notorious a ruffian, but back of my horror of what I was hearing, I own to a very personal fear that in some way Marshall might yet be called upon to suffer for his share in Fawkes’s plot, and that I stood in danger of being held accountable for this.

“It was decided by Fawkes and Catesby that I should go into Warwickshire, where Sir Everard Digby had sent forth a call to the Catholic gentry throughout the Midlands to assemble as for a great hunt at Dunchurch. There, after the betrayal of the plot, we were joined by its desperate inventors; but when the fact of Fawkes’s arrest became known to our party it dwindled to a mere handful. Only the most undaunted of the King’s enemies remained to hazard fortune and life. Yet even so, we marched toward Warwick, where we helped ourselves to horses from the very castle, and defeated a Sheriff’s party that had been raised against us. Then we thought to beat

the country for recruits, but met with failure; and I doubt not you know of the utter failure of the uprising; how in the hue and cry that followed all the leaders were either killed or taken. When all was over I made my escape to London, and went into hiding, for my name had gotten abroad in this connection and a price was put upon me, so that had I been found I was like to lose my head.

"I was in London still when vengeance was taken on those inveterate enemies of the King. I saw Digby, with Grant, Bates, and Robert Winter suffer death in Paul's churchyard; and the very next day, at Westminster, I saw Rookwood, Keyes, Thomas Winter, and Fawkes go to their death; my good friend so weak from the tortures his jailers had inflicted that he was scarce able to go up the ladder. I tell you, Farraday, when such hopes are shattered, it is a bitter thing for those who are trapped amongst the ruins!

"For months I lay quiet in the house of a friend in London; a very honest merchant he was, aye, and a staunch Protestant, too, for the matter of that. As it chanced, he had put some pounds in this enterprise of the London Company's, and when he told me of it I resolved to come hither to this new land to try my fortunes, for it mattered little to me where I ended my days.

"But you have given me a purpose, and I shall sail with Captain Newport when he comes; for my friend would have it that I provide myself for my return in case I liked not the look of things here.

"'Twas my guilty conscience, you may think, that caused me to look upon you as a spy, but it was also a very honest wish to keep my head on my shoulders, for the King and Parliament have taken very extraordinary measures to ferret out those concerned in the plot; but I dare hope that by the time I reach England their vengeance

will be satisfied and their vigilance somewhat relaxed." He paused.

I fear I had outlasted my very proper horror of his part in that most infamous gunpowder plot; my own concerns loomed so large that I had mind for naught else, for it was possible he would see Mary in advance of me—and what then?

"And when you reach England?" I asked at length.

"God knows, Farraday! But you may rest content on one point: my daughter will not marry young Maxwell!"

CHAPTER NINETEEN.

THE year was almost spent before John Smith was in a mood to start on his voyage up the Chickahominy; indeed, not until the first of December would he declare himself willing to make the beginning of this enterprise, and then, that the work at James Town might still go forward, he took with him but ten men in the barge, and with these set forth to discover that fantastical passage to the South Sea, the lure of which was ever present in the minds of our gentlemen captains.

I had counted on being one of his companions, but by a fortunate mischance, as it turned out, I had hurt my right arm, this hurt being in the nature of a sprain which rendered it nigh useless, so perforce I remained behind, giving place to one better fitted to pull an oar or handle musket and match.

I think a matter of some ten days had elapsed when, late one afternoon, the cry was raised that the barge had been sighted far up the river by two of our men who were shooting wild fowl by the shore. This took a number of us to the water front anxious for the news at first hand. Straining our eyes, we could discern the barge a mile off; it was being pulled against both wind and tide, and came slowly toward us out of the increasing gloom.

"Think you, Farraday, they have so soon found the South Sea?" asked Marshall at my side.

"Heaven send they have!" I made answer; for since I doubted not the western ocean was somewhere there, it

would have pleased me well could John Smith have had the honour of its discovery.

"I'll swear if stout John o' James Town has failed, there be none here likely to succeed!" said Marshall, yet though he would never forego his sly jest at my friend's expense, he had a very honest liking for him, as all true men had.

As the barge came nearer I noted that it held not all the company that had set forth in it. Whilst I was straining my eyes to make sure of my count, someone raised a cheer; but save that the man at the steering oar tossed his hand aloft, this got us no response from the barge, and I noted the slovenly handling of the oars as they entered and left the water. It was the rowing of men worn down by fatigue to the verge of utter exhaustion. Then presently I was able to make out that John Smith was missing—and where were Cassen, Emery, and Robinson? My heart sank with a foretaste of what was to come.

The barge was now close in, and Anthony Gosnold was the first man to step ashore. As he did so, I cried out:

"Where is Captain Smith?"

For answer Gosnold shook his head, but would not trust himself to speak.

"And where Cassen?" cried another.

"Dead," said Gosnold.

"And Robinson?"

The questions leaped from us as we pressed about him.

"God save us, gentlemen!" cried Master Anthony, with a strange catch to his voice. "Our true and stout comrades were slain by the savages—and it was only by a miracle that any escaped to bear you the tidings!"

As men overwhelmed by some great and sudden tragedy we turned back into the fort, walking silently as in a daze.

John Smith dead! It was sore to think on, that after all his brave adventures by sea and land, he who had

bearded Turk and Spaniard should find his death in far-off Virginia at the hands of savages poorly armed with bows and flint-tipped arrows! I could scarce credit it, but I felt a sudden rage lay hold of me for those unknowing pagans who had compassed his fall, that they should have slain so true a Christian and so stout a warrior!

We repaired to the house we had but recently builded for public use, and which we called our Parliament House, that all might have opportunity to hear Gosnold's relation.

On that press of men, for the most part sober and grave of face, as they had good right to be, there fell an instant hush when Master Anthony began to tell briefly of the voyage up the Chickahominy. They had got about seventy miles from its mouth, as they estimated the distance, when it became evident the depth of water would not admit of their going forward in the barge; so they had held a council, and it was agreed John Smith should advance with their Indian guide in a canoe, taking with him Emery and Robinson.

Thus they had separated; but presently George Cassen and some others would go ashore to fowl, but no sooner had they placed foot on land than they were set upon by savages who had been concealed in the woods. Cassen had been slain, but the men with him had escaped in safety to the barge, which the Indians durst not attack.

"We now began to fear for Captain Smith and his companions," said Gosnold, "and after a time it was decided we should at any hazard proceed further up the river. This we could do by going overboard when we came to the shallows, up which we dragged the barge by main strength. Ere long we found the canoe drawn up on the shore; from this point a trail led into the woods, which we had followed only a little distance when we came on

the smouldering ashes of a fire, and, most pitiful to see, the bodies of Emery and Robinson." Gosnold paused, overcome by the memory. "Of Smith we saw nothing. I doubt not he had left the two soldiers to warm themselves and had gone on to explore, taking with him his guide."

"Perchance by God's help he has escaped!" cried Mr. Hunt eagerly.

Gosnold only shook his head.

"Nay, sir, there is no hope of that. Had I dared to venture forward with the men at hand, I question not I should very presently have come upon his dead body, too; but I durst not do this, since it would have been to throw away the lives of all, so perforce I returned to the barge; and we had scarcely re-embarked when the savages appeared on the shore in considerable numbers, making every hostile demonstration."

"Sir, I will ask you to write out your relation, that it may be forwarded to the London Council when the opportunity offers," said Ratcliffe, and he glanced about him. "No blame can attach to you for your part in this ill-managed enterprise. Would to God it had not been carried forward with such hot-headed recklessness."

At this amazing speech, with its slur at John Smith's leadership, I felt my blood wax hot; nor was I alone in my feeling of resentment, for good Mr. Hunt cried quickly:

"I pray, sir, that you spare the dead!"

"Had he lived I should have put him under arrest for his bungling, the lives of the Company's soldiers are not to be lightly cast away!" returned Ratcliffe, with a vast show of spirit.

But this was more than John Smith's friends could endure in silence.

"Shame!" said one.

"Who has fed us all?" cried a second, from the back of the room.

"And who skulked?" shouted a third.

And now we lost all control of ourselves. John Smith's friends forgetting themselves in their very honest rage that he should have been thus traduced by so empty a creature as our president. Insults flew back and forth across the room, and the two factions came promptly to the point of blows. Yet just when it seemed there could be no end to the debate but this, Lieutenant Percy, Mr. Hunt, and Anthony Gosnold, cooler of judgment than the rest, came in betwixt the two parties, and by fair words quited the tumult.

"This is the worst misfortune that has yet fallen on us," said Marshall to me as we left the Parliament House. "John Smith is the only member of the Council the honest men trust, and now he is gone."

And within twenty-four hours there was this difference that one might note: The president's favourites became utterly brazen in their disregard of all rule, whilst a callous recklessness settled down on those of us who were the workers, since we knew we had nothing to expect of Ratcliffe and Martin but a double portion of toil; and that what we won by industry they would as surely waste in idleness.

But what we saw with even less liking was this: that now John Smith was gone, Wingfield and Archer, who had been living in disgrace since that affair of the pinnace, visibly plucked up their courage and began to pay court to our silly president, who was so beguiled by their pleasant flatteries that within three days' time they were going swelling about the fort, commanding this and that, and with their hands continually extended for the best of what we could provide.

Christmas came, with a sullen wind roaring in the frost-bound woods and much drifting ice on the great river. In the fort the condition was verging rapidly toward an open mutiny. Again famine threatened us, for our stores were being swiftly consumed, and there was none now to replenish them, since Ratcliffe would not trust himself outside the palisades. He had abandoned himself utterly to the counsels of Wingfield and Archer, and the pinnacle was being furnished again as if for a voyage.

It was the day after Christmas and I was on guard at the gate, bitter enough at heart, my homesickness a hundred times augmented by the season; for at Dane's Hill we had always made much of Christmas, with presents and good cheer; and the day before I had lain hours together on my bed in the corner of my hut, listening to a driving wind that blanketed the land with snow and ice, conscious, too, that I was mighty poorly nourished withal on a thin cornmeal gruel, where one searched long for vagrant scraps of cured deer flesh, and cursed the cook for a scurvy cheat who had increased his own portion by withholding that of his fellows; for there remained neither good cheer nor good feeling in James Town.

I own I was in the very dregs of things, with a mind unwilling to admit that there was either hope or good in life, when of a sudden I chanced to espy a band of the savages lurking on the edge of the wood. Straightway I sent a messenger to Lieutenant Percy that he should come and treat with them. He brought with him Anthony Gosnold and Marshall, with one or two others to guard against any treachery, for I think there was never such a people delighting in cunning villainies. With our muskets ready, we stood about the open gate whilst our officer, stepping forth a little way, signified by means of signs and the few words of their language he had mastered, that

if two of the Indians would lay aside their weapons they might, if they so wished it, enter the fort. This was promptly done; two of the savages, putting aside their clubs and bows, came to the gate, tall fellows, well set and of a grave manner, with their skin-robcs cast snugly about them, for the day was bitter cold.

Now, what with our dealings with all the nearby villages and the savages themselves coming often to the fort to trade, we knew a great number of their principal chiefs and head men, but these two, I could have sworn, I had never clapped eyes on until that moment; and it was equally plain that our fort and ourselves filled them with wonder, which they sought to hide under a stoic front.

When they stood fairly before Percy, the one who seemed the greater chief tossed aside his robe of skins, uncovering a pouch of badger's fur that hung at his belt; from this he took a folded paper, and extending a naked arm decked with polished copper bands, dropped it in the Lieutenant's palm. Percy had no sooner opened this paper, which seemed to be but a leaf torn from a small book, than he cried out:

"Now, thank God, it is from Captain Smith!"

With only the knowledge, that somewhere in the fastness of the great wood our stout comrade still lived, we were like men transformed; for while there was the breath of life in him, the end of James Town was not yet!

Marshall smote me a lusty blow betwixt the shoulders.

"We were overhasty in our mourning for John o' James Town," he said. "His vituperators be like to have a chance to eat their words."

"God Himself has set that feast for them in the wilderness!" said Gosnold quickly.

We crowded about Percy with little courtesy, intent

on Smith's letter, and I doubt if any speech of his ever more truly showed the manner of man he was than those written words we now looked on.

First, he would have us know he was prisoner to the Emperor Powhatan, but the plans for his disposal he could not say. This he would impress upon us: we were not on any account to trust the savages who bore his message, since they were naught but spies for their king, who had revealed to him that he purposed some large villainy which should bring about the death of all the English within the bounds of his lands. In particular, we were not to attempt his own rescue, since the strength of the colony was not sufficient for such an enterprise. Ostensibly he had despatched these messengers the king had loaned him for certain trinkets, but we were to use the occasion to affright them well, making the fullest display of our muskets and culverins; as for the trinkets, we were to leave them outside the fort at a spot he designated, since he had told them in advance, to mystify them, where these presents would be found after they had given up the paper.

"God knows, it passes all!" cried Percy, when he had come to the end of the letter. He turned to me: "Whilst I hold these savages in talk, do you and Marshall carry the news into the fort. Have the drums beat, get the men under arms, and send the master gunner and a squad to the platforms to fire the culverins. We will make such a tumult here as would delight the very heart of John Smith himself!"

As I hurried off I realised that my mood had changed. Where I had been so recently cast down, I was now elate. I saw John Smith's handsome bearded face, and I heard the honest ring to his loud, cheery laugh. It was not such an evil season, after all.

With Marshall I went from hut to hut, passing the word that John Smith yet lived, and that we were to furnish a lasting scare to the savages who had brought his message.

Only some huts we passed by, for they sheltered Ratcliffe's following, and when the drums began to roll I saw certain sour faces that looked on disapprovingly at what was going forward. Then one of the culverins roared, and the same moment the soldiers fell into line and sallied out of the gate, to find Smith's messengers in full flight to the woods. We gave them a blank volley, which even caused them to mend their pace, though they were running marvellously well.

Percy set instantly at work drilling us in the cornfield, every now and then halting us to fire a blank charge, and all this while the drums rolled, and at intervals a culverin roared. Our frolic was well under way when presently Ratcliffe, black of face, and attended by Wingfield, Archer, and his little court, issued from the fort to complain of the waste of gunpowder. Percy had already sent him Smith's letter, so he was not in any doubt as to the meaning of the sudden tumult.

"It's a reckless extravagance, Lieutenant Percy, to burn the Company's powder in this fashion!" I heard him say.

"I think it an excellent strategy," retorted Percy quietly. "I doubt not you have mastered the contents of Captain Smith's letter?"

"'Tis like himself——"

"In that he puts our safety before his own," answered Percy drily.

"Do you take him seriously, then?" said Ratcliffe, with a show of choler.

"Is it your wish I order back the men, and save the Company's powder?" demanded Percy.

I saw Wingfield pluck Ratcliffe by the sleeve of his doublet and whisper something in his ear, and our president, after listening a moment, nodded acquiescence as he turned again to Percy.

"Since you have such a fancy for the blank charges, go on with them. You must own, sir, they are marvelously like him who has inspired them."

CHAPTER TWENTY.

THE days passed and we heard nothing more of John Smith. Swift on the heels of his messengers, Archer and Wingfield had transferred the stores from the pinnacle to the fort; now, however, that naught was being heard from the one man they feared, they began to fit the pinnacle afresh for her voyage, and with a brazen effrontery that set one's blood on fire. Yet their party was so strong that not a hand was raised against them.

We were now at the beginning of the second week in January, and in a season of extreme cold, for that winter was one of unusual severity. I cannot be sure, but I think it was the morning of the eighth day of the month when long before dawn I came suddenly awake, to hear in a lull of the storm that was raging without what seemed a hand fumbling with the latch of my door, and then quickly there was piercing cold in the hut and some flakes of snow found me out where I lay on my bed. I thought the violence of the wind had wrenched the latch from its fastenings, but out of the blackness came Marshall's voice speaking my name.

"Are you awake, Farraday?" he said, and I heard him kick the door shut.

"What's amiss now?" I asked, sitting up.

"You are wanted at Percy's quarters to consider what means we shall take to frustrate Wingfield and Archer and regain the pinnacle. Ten minutes of John Smith would be a panacea to all our present disorders!"

"What fresh news is there?" I questioned, as I left my bed and began to dress.

"Why, Ratcliffe spent half the night labouring with Percy so he would agree to sail in the pinnace, for Percy has a powerful connection at home, and they are loath to leave him behind; for the rest they care naught, and some twenty odd of us are to be abandoned, amongst the number Master Hunt—whose preaching is better than his doctrine—and Anthony Gosnold. But they would better have left Percy alone, since he has no mind to play the traitor to the rest."

I finished dressing and went forth with Marshall.

"A wild morn!" I said.

"Man, what was that?" said Marshall halting, and clutching me by the sleeve.

"I heard nothing," I said.

"I would have sworn I heard the creaking of the great gate," he muttered.

"It was the wind," I said.

"I dare say."

And we went forward again, with our eyes fixed on the light in Percy's windows, for such was the darkness and the fall of snow that without some such beacon one might readily have gone astray even within the narrow limits of the fort itself.

I think we had taken not above ten steps, however, when there appeared before us out of the blackness and the storm a half score of spectral figures. They seemed to have dropped from the heavens or to have sprung from the earth! My first thought was that it was some of our own men, but whether of Wingfield's faction or honest fellow fellows who had cast their lot with Percy, I could not say; then a step more and I was in the very midst of them, and saw that they were neither of one faction nor the other,

in short not Englishmen at all, but savages; which sent the blood leaping away from my heart on the instant, leaving me faint and sick, for I own I was never good at such surprises, though give me time and I come quickly to a worthy purpose to save my own skin at all hazard. I was about to cry out a warning, when a heavy hand descended on my shoulder and a cheerful voice said in my ear:

“Hold your peace, Farraday!”

At the same moment the hand swung me about on my heel, and I found myself looking into a familiar face—it was John Smith. In my great joy I was more like to cry out than I had been because of my previous fright; but again, and this time laughingly, my friend bade me be silent, so I gripped him hard by the hand that he might know my feeling. I think Marshall was quite as much moved as was I at this encounter, though he was on no such intimate terms with Smith. And while we three rejoiced there in the black breath of the storm, those shaven pagans I had first observed stood about us grave and attentive, with their skin robes cast over their shoulders, and with neither clubs nor weapons of any sort displayed.

“They are the Emperor Powhatan’s chief men,” said Smith, nodding toward them. “They have conducted me through the woods for three days and not beat out my brains, but for all that I had them put away their weapons before they entered the fort.”

I warrant never was a surprise more complete, and never had his presence been more needed; so without wasting time on words we dragged Smith off through the snow with the savages stalking at our heels, for they seemed loath to be separated from him.

We found Mr. Hunt, Anthony Gosnold, and four or five

others assembled in Percy's quarters, mighty glum and chapfallen as one could see, but when John Smith strode in amongst them with the firelight to play on his weather-beaten face and ruddy beard, and to give back the glint of his clear blue eyes, they came to their feet and sent forth a shout of joyous welcome, though not before I had clapped the door to, to keep in the tumult his presence had provoked.

Before the dawn broke and before the conspirators had left their beds even, every true man in James Town was under arms. Then after a little time Smith would have Lieutenant Percy take Marshall and me and go to Ratcliffe's quarters with a message. We found our president breakfasting with Wingfield and Archer, which in itself was not a pleasant sight, since we could but think his hospitality had been better disposed elsewhere. I could see he was vastly surprised at the early call with which we were favouring him, but he civilly bade us enter.

"Sir," said Percy, speaking very drily and with a cynical curl to his lips, "Captain Smith presents his compliments to President Ratcliffe, and would know when the Worshipful President can receive an embassy from the Emperor Powhatan."

If we had exploded a mine, it could not have bred greater consternation than Percy's level speech.

"It's a lie—a trick!" shouted Wingfield, who was first to find his tongue.

I doubt not the ghastly spectre of Captain Kendall rose before him. He looked from one to the other of his companions, but their jaws had fallen. Percy smiled.

"I can forgive Master Wingfield that, yet I would assure him that Captain Smith is this minute in my house with some ten worthy chiefs of the Emperor Powhatan."

But Ratcliffe vouchsafed no word. He sat there at the

head of his table, tugging at his beard with nervous fingers; and after waiting a moment, Percy gave us a sign and we withdrew.

Until the noon hour this was the manner of things in the fort. Our faction stood on guard at the great gate, and on the platforms where our ordnance was mounted was the master gunner and his men, their lighted matches in their hands. No one could doubt it would be a serious business to steal the pinnacle now. All this while Ratcliffe put not his foot outside his quarters, though his followers, scenting danger, had gathered about him. Shortly after the noon hour, however, there came Archer with five men to Percy's cabin.

"A nimble and active scoundrel that," said John Smith to me. "I doubt not his end will be worthy of himself."

Captain Archer was bearer of a message from Ratcliffe. He desired Smith to appear before him. Smith would have gone alone in response to this summons, but Gosnold and Percy would not hear to this, and insisted on accompanying him, whilst they cautioned us to be on the alert for any treachery that those shifty friends of the president's might purpose.

Of what happened when John Smith appeared before Ratcliffe I learned afterwards. They found the president with his friends gathered about him, and urged into a kind of courage, especially when Smith presented himself without bluster, but very quietly and civilly, and with all due respect for Ratcliffe's office. No one doubted but that Smith's not having left his dead body in the winter woods for wolves to rend had been an exceeding disappointment to Ratcliffe and Wingfield, as well as some others. Now somewhat recovered from their chagrin that he lived, they brought forth an amazing charge against him, which was nothing less than that he was directly responsible for the

death of Emery and Robinson; in short, they had of a sudden become such favourers of the Scriptures that they were determined he should be tried under the Levitical Law. Not only this, but they had made choice of his judges, and promised him a speedy trial; declaring the sense of the Company to be that in consideration of his past services he merited an early opportunity to clear himself of the imputation of rash leadership.

With this astonishing news Smith came from the president's quarters equally divided betwixt rage and laughter; rage that they durst infer that Robinson and Emery had suffered death through any neglect of his, and mirth that they should count him fool enough to risk himself before judges who were already pledged to condemn him.

"Do they think I will consent to be tried by all the laws since the time of Moses?" cried he. "They may think me an arrant knave, if they fancy, but what have I done that they should hold me a fool as well?"

Yet Ratcliffe was strong enough not to be despised, for Wingfield had means with which to purchase friends, nor was the president himself lacking in favours which he could bestow when minded; whilst John Smith had nothing but his solid merit, a commodity that is of uncertain value in this world, and James Town was the world in little. We had our great rascals and our small, our envious souls who were more hurt by sight of another's virtues than by any wickedness; indeed, I doubt if there will ever be anywhere a leadership so rotten, as wholly to lack for defenders.

The upshot of John Smith's meeting with Ratcliffe was that we stood at our posts all that short winter afternoon, with the pinnacle, magazine, and ordnance in our possession, so that every actual advantage remained with us. I had been stationed at the gate, but at sundown my relief came. I was told to report at Percy's cabin, which had become

our headquarters. There I found Smith, Percy, and Gosnold, and there my supper was presently fetched me by Percy's own servant.

"Draw up by the fire, Farraday," said Smith, making room for me before the blazing logs. "We have come to the decision that there will be neither peace nor order in James Town until a proper punishment has been brought to Wingfield and Ratcliffe."

Hearing this, I bethought me of Captain Kendall. My face must have told him something of what was passing in my mind.

"Nay, Dick, we cannot shoot all the rogues in this naked land, and so we have reasoned it out thus; we will bide our time; but before another dawn comes we expect to lodge those lusty traitors aboard the pinnace. That done, they shall not set foot ashore again until Newport arrives in these waters. Then there must be speedy trade with the savages or we will none of us live to see the spring come," said Smith, whose mind, now that he had planned for the arrest of his enemies, was reaching out to those fresh problems that confronted him.

"You are as greedy of corn as a Spaniard of gold," said Percy.

"What of Powhatan?" I asked.

"A grim old man with a sour look, Farraday."

"Yet he spared you," I said.

"Under God, I owe my deliverance not to the Emperor Powhatan, but to Pocahontas, his dearest daughter. She is naught but a child, but of an exceeding goodness, as I am here to testify."

He seemed disposed for silence when he had said this, but we would have his narrative.

"There is little enough to tell: I left Robinson and Emery and had gone forward with only my Indian guide

when of a sudden I found myself surrounded by some two hundred savages, very warlike and thirsting for my blood. With my garters I bound my guide to me, making him serve me for a buckler; in this fashion I began to beat back toward the point where I expected to find Robinson and Emery. I fared well at first, but at length an arrow struck me in the thigh, and I thought it time to give those frisking pagans a lesson; so I fired, killing one of their number, which stayed them for a season; but presently they came at me again, shooting their arrows with such spirit that I was galled in several places, which angered me to the point that I fired once more, killing two very forward knaves. After this they were minded to keep their distance, and I was in hope that I could fight my way successfully to my comrades, but I must needs always keep my face turned on my tormentors, and this brought me to my middle in a half-frozen marsh, where despite all my efforts I remained until I was nigh dead from the extreme cold. Rather than perish in such a wretched fashion, I surrendered, trusting always that God would show me a way of escape. My captor was King of the Pamaunkee, and after I had thrown my arms away he had me hauled from the morass. To him I showed my compass, which kept that whole band in a state of wonder for an hour; then they bethought them of those I had slain and their humour changed. I was tied to a tree and thought my end had surely come, but their king was of another mind than his warriors, so that in the end I was carried in triumph to Orapaks, one of their towns. It was whilst I lay there I found means to send word of my captivity."

"And in what state of mind did your messengers return to Orapaks?" I asked.

"They were filled with astonishment at all they had witnessed, but I was guarded with the greater care for that

very reason. They took me from village to village, making a kind of show of me for their whole nation, until at last I was brought before the Emperor Powhatan at a place called Werowocomoco, where they held a great council to determine whether I should be slain or not. My death was speedily decided upon, and was near coming to pass, but for God's goodness——”

“Aye, but where does the maid appear?” cried Percy.

“Be patient, and we will even come to that!” said Smith. “I understood little enough of what was going forward until I was dragged forth and my head placed upon two great stones. Then two of the savages stood over me with clubs ready to beat out my brains. They but waited Powhatan's signal, when Pocahontas, his favourite daughter, seeing that no entreaty would prevail, ran forward and taking my head in her arms claimed me for her own. And for her sake Powhatan consented I should live.”

I think it was nearly midnight when Percy, who had gone abroad to acquaint himself with the condition of affairs in the fort, returned with the tidings that the lewd gathering in Ratcliffe's cabin had at last broken up. This point being settled, Smith called in the guards with all dispatch, and with as little confusion as possible appointed each man his work. When this had been done, he with Percy and Gosnold and some others of us went straight to the president's quarters.

It was in darkness, but a knock brought Ratcliffe, shivering in his bed-gown, to the door. In a twinkling we had seized him, and with sundry threats as to what would be done to him did he cry out, we entered his house, where I uncovered the hooded lanthorn I had brought. Its flame showed us a sorry figure, for no doubt Ratcliffe's idea was that we would deal violently with him.

“Dress quickly!” said Smith.

"You durst not lay hands on me, Captain Smith!" cried Ratcliffe, summoning up the little courage that lodged in his craven heart.

Then he wrenched away from Gosnold and made as if to run from the place, but at the door he was met by Marshall, who thrust him back.

"Dress, or we will carry you forth naked!" said Smith.

"This is mutiny—to the last man you shall answer for it with your lives!" cried Ratcliffe.

"Those are stout words to come from one who had schemed to abandon his fellows," rejoined Smith quietly.

"The London Council——" began Ratcliffe.

"Will know of this in good season." Smith finished for him.

"To your final ruin, Captain Smith!" panted Ratcliffe.

"Even so, London and the London Council is a long way removed from this spot, and since you have such a fancy for the pinnacle you shall live aboard of her from this day forth; but you shall not lack for company; there are those who will share your banishment."

Again Ratcliffe broke from Gosnold, and this time got to his sword. Before he could use it Percy struck it from his grasp; yet ere we could lay hands on him he possessed himself of a pistol. He was given no chance for a trial of the piece, however, for quickly and silently Percy threw himself upon the frantic man, bearing him down to the floor. There he was bound and gagged, and then, wrapping his blankets about him, we carried him struggling from the place and bore him aboard the pinnacle.

I think he took heart somewhat when he found he was to be dealt with in no summary fashion, since I question not the fear of death had been before him and that blind terror had nerved him to the point of resistance. Certain it was that once he was lodged in the cabin of the pinnacle

he gave us no more trouble, but in sullen silence put on the clothes we had brought.

Percy and I remained with him while Smith and the others went ashore, returning presently with Wingfield and Archer, very humble, disposed, however, to blame Ratcliffe that he had planned to no better purpose than this. In their mutual recriminations they soon reached a stage of such bitterness it became necessary to keep them apart, for they lacked not the willingness to cut each other's throats had the means but existed.

Now the arrest of these master rogues had been managed with such dispatch that none of their following knew of what had gone forward until it was broad day. The first man to scent the happenings of that night was one John Laydon, a common scoundrel who was destined to achieve a notable villainy later on, for which it was God's pleasure he should suffer a worthy punishment.

Some errand took him in the grey of the dawn to Ratcliffe's quarters, but he found the door blown open and the snow drifted into the room. From him the word spread quickly that Captain Smith had laid hands on the president. This straightway chilled the heart of those mutineers, for when later the drum beat to quarters, not one of their number possessed the hardihood to hold aloof from its summoning. To the last man in James Town we lined up in front of John Smith.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

IT was our fortune to pass swiftly and with but little respite from hardship to hardship. Now that we had Wingfield and Ratcliffe happily disposed under guard aboard the pinnace, it seemed as though such famine and death as we had known in the summer would again be visited upon us. We had only the savages to turn to in this extremity, and in spite of the protestations of friendship and love the Emperor Powhatan had made him, John Smith was doubtful of the reception we would be accorded should we look to him for our sustenance.

“He is no proper promise-keeping king,” said Smith, “but a subtile heathen with all the shifting humours of a child; having slipped through his clutches once, I am loathe to hazard it again, with the men and means at hand.”

And indeed he was wise, for there were but thirty odd of our colonists living; perhaps a third of whom were of a very doubtful honesty, by which I mean that they were ready for any roguery that could be set afoot. Since no trust could be put in these, the score of worthier men that remained must needs do all the work; it was theirs to guard the fort day and night, as well as the pinnace where our three prisoners were still lodged. Such labours left but a scanty handful to go and come.

In good truth the situation had become such as to defy even John Smith's ready scheming; but in this pass, when we were reduced to our last measure of corn, a thing happened that clearly showed how God was not willing the

foundation we had buildd in this new land at the price of so much suffering should go for naught.

One morning the rumour went the rounds of the fort that a band of Indians had been moved to seek trade with us. I hurried to the gate to see if this were so, and found that most of my fellow colonists had preceded me thither. It had always been necessary to seek out the savages in their villages when the pinch of hunger was felt, but now I saw a rare sight; it was nothing less than a considerable train of them emerging from the wood that lay toward the mainland. They were bending under great baskets of corn and venison, as we presently saw.

At the head of this wild train was a slight girlish figure garbed in a robe of doe-skin edged about with the soft down from the breasts of wood-pigeons. Though I had never seen her until that moment I knew at a glance that this could be none other than the Emperor's daughter, and, indeed, to show her rank, she wore in her hair a white heron's wing, whilst about her wrist were fastened bracelets of red coral which had come from the far south; for the rest, her dress and adornment was very simple, leggings of soft tanned deer-skin, and moccasins of the same material decorated with coloured quills; in her hand she carried her bow of hickory wood and at her back was slung her quiver full of arrows.

"It is my dear little maid, Pocahontas!" cried John Smith, and he bade us throw open the gate.

God could not have moved the child to come to our rescue at a more timely season, and I daresay there is hardly an old settler or ancient soldier who has lived to this day but can recall the likeness of that little wild thing of the woods with her dark eager face under its nodding white plume as she entered our fort at the head of her band.

Yet she was mighty timid of the beared men in clanking back and breast plates, with swords girt at their sides or muskets in their hands, who now crowded about her doffing their caps; for as Englishmen we knew how to show a proper respect to a king's daughter, even though that king were naught but a poor painted heathen. But the troubled look that lurked in her black eyes cleared away instantly when John Smith stood before her. I warrant me had she never seen that handsome soldier the child would not have come through the frost-bound woods, all the way from the banks of the River York, with her store of corn and meat.

But whatever the feeling that had inspired her to this charity, we men of James Town were not slow to do her homage or properly to reward her people, who were given trinkets and made to refresh themselves from the provisions they had brought, for it is certain that had they come empty handed, they must needs have hungered at the fort. Meanwhile the dear and blessed Pocahontas, as we came afterwards to call her, was shown our huts and church, and the pinnace riding at anchor, at which she exclaimed, since it was so many times larger than the largest canoe. Then she was taken to one of the platforms, where a culverin was loaded with stones and discharged into the top of a great oak that stood by the shore; the stones wrought a pretty havoc amongst the branches. This and the report of the piece filled her attendants with a very manifest fear, so that they one and all fell flat on their faces; but that small royal maid stood very rigid at John Smith's side as the long echoes rolled across the ice-bound river, and one might see that her pride was beyond her fear, in which she was truly a king's daughter.

By the middle of the afternoon she would go back to the bank of the York with her basket bearers, and to show

our respect and love for her we lined up under arms in two files beside the gate; and she very proudly, and close followed by retinue, passed forth into the open betwixt the armed men. The last I saw of her small pagan ladyship was the nodding white of her heron's plume amongst the brown of the forest growth.

That was but the first of her many visit to James Town, for knowing our need she came from the York at intervals of every four or five days with supplies of corn and meat. As John Smith has truly writ, she was next under God the instrument to preserve the colony from death, famine, and utter confusion. I oftentimes think of her goodness to starving men, and how she was in after years led to a worthy knowledge of the true God, so far forsaking all the heathen ways of her people as to marry John Rolfe, a very honest gentleman of good estate, who loved and cherished her as she merited; for which imprudence I have heard it said that King James seemed minded to deal in some drastic fashion with Master Rolfe, since his majesty was affronted that a simple gentleman should presume to wed one of royal rank. I say when I stop to think of these matters, I would for very tenderness of her memory take back some of the plain truths I have found to tell of the savages, as in her short life she had both the means and the willingness to atone for much of the harm they were minded to do the colony.

The first quarter of that year which had begun with John Smith's release from captivity, and the colony's rescued from famine by Pocahontas, was to be fruitful in many ways; for whilst we were still living by the grace of our little princess' bounty, a sail was espied down the river. In all the months that had intervened since Captain Newport's departure for England, that great tidal stream had lain empty, if one excepted the occasional canoe of the

savage and the small craft of the fort; but now very stately, with a fair wind which sent her spooning forward, the ship came on.

At first we did not know but it might prove to be some vagrant Spaniard who had found a way into those waters, perhaps from the South Sea itself; so with our drums beating a call to quarters, we crowded to the platforms in a mood to fight if there was need of it. As we stood with our eyes fixed upon the ship, of a sudden we saw the flag of England flutter aloft; at the same moment a puff of white smoke no bigger than a man's hand burst from the stranger's side, to be swiftly followed by another and another; and then to our ears came the dull thunder of her guns.

We waited to see and hear no more, but our flags were run up and our culverins bellowed a welcome, for past all doubt it was Captain Newport come again.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

NIGHT had settled down on James Town when John Smith entered my hut. He came empty-handed, yet I durst not ask concerning the letters I had waited and lived for all those long months. A shake of the head gave an answer to the question that was trembling on my lips, and he rested his hand on my shoulder with a kindly pressure that I might know he grieved with me in this bitter disappointment.

"Nay, Dick, Captain Newport brings no word that touches you; there are neither letters nor any expression from the London Council concerning your case."

This was a blow I had scarce expected; it was true, however, that Newport had spent no great time in England, and there were ways to account for it that he brought me no word from home; yet I found I had adventured the hope that his coming would mean the end to all my doubt and uncertainty, nor had I considered it possible that I would be forced to continue longer in Virginia against my will.

"Bear up, Farraday," continued Smith. "No news is good news. I warrant your father has ere this journeyed up to London to lay your case before the Council."

For he would give me what comfort he might; but I could only think that Newport must discharge his cargo, relade, and sail back to England, and traverse that mighty ocean again from east to west before those letters for which I seemed to be living, could reach me.

"'Tis something that you have put an end to their

uncertainty respecting you," said Smith, regarding me out of kind eyes.

"You speak true, and I thank God for that," I said at last, and, as I would not have him think I magnified my private griefs to such proportions that the common good meant nothing to me, I now asked what special word Newport brought.

"Why, he sailed in company with a second ship, the *Phoenix*, which he fears has been cast away, for she was lost sight of in a great storm that overwhelmed them as they made the Capes. 'Tis a sorry business, Farraday, all those stout seamen and colonists gone to bottom!" And he fell moodily to stroking his beard.

This intelligence made me think how my own case was so much better, since I still lived; nor did I despair, for all the present shattering of my hope, of some day returning to England. Smith drew up a stool and seated himself at my side. There was silence betwixt us for a little space. My mind conjured up the vision of that doomed ship lashed by the winter seas. It was a sobering thing to think on.

"Dick, it is past belief what fantastical notions have hold of the London Council. I doubt not some of the men of this sending are very worthy gentlemen, and amongst the lot are certain Poles and Dutchmen who are to make glass and tar, but the rest are for the most part the veriest riff-raff; and now hold hard, for here comes the very cream of this consignment, one Richard Belfield—a perfumer!" and Smith threw back his head and roared with laughter.

"For what purpose does he come?" I asked in amazement.

"You must find your own answer to that question. Mayhap he is to curl our locks, and sprinkle pleasant

scents about the fort. The care the Council has for us passes all."

"How does Newport take the news of Wingfield's disgrace, and Ratcliffe's arrest?" I questioned.

"Say on, Dick—and Kendall's execution," Smith prompted.

"Aye, and that?" I said.

"He is not disposed to trouble about that last; he concerns himself more with the living than the dead."

Smith's face darkened as he spoke, and I could sense it that his meeting with Newport had not been all he could desire.

"But Wingfield returns to England?" I said.

"I warrant he does—and Archer, too! But we have reached no agreement touching Ratcliffe, and I begin to doubt if I shall have my way there. They were both Raleigh's captains in the days gone by, and Newport has a tenderness for the fellow by reason of that; moreover Martin is disposed to side against me, so it is safe to say I shall be outvoted in the Council, and that Ratcliffe will come back into office—which is a wrong to all honest men. Yet must it be endured if we are to have even the semblance of peace."

Newport remained with us fourteen weeks in all, during which time he made a notable visit to the Emperor Powhatan, and was so outwitted in his dealings with that artful pagan, that for copper and trinkets which were of the trade value of twenty hogsheads of corn, he received only four bushels. But John Smith somewhat made amends for this, exchanging a few handful of glass beads of a special colour and pattern for upward of three hundred bushels of corn; and so shrewdly did he manage this business and such was his knowledge of the Indian nature, that Powhatan esteemed it that he had been more lucky in his com-

merce with Smith than in his previous trade with Newport, where he had really profited out of all reason.

It was close on our return from this expedition that James Town was swept by a great fire. Amongst the buildings consumed was our church and storehouse, as well as many huts; but a thing that could not be replaced was the loss of good Mr. Hunt's library, which was utterly destroyed.

We had just set about rebuilding the ruined fort when we were smitten with a gold madness. Certain glittering sands were discovered, samples of these were brought to our refiners and jewelers, who came from their secret tests looking profound and wise, nor did they hesitate to declare that we had at last found gold, whereat our colonists, especially those but recently arrived, were seized with the very frenzy of hope. I doubt not to most the joys of London, sinful and otherwise, loomed large and close by; certain it was there was no thought but to dig gold, wash gold, refine gold, and load gold. Only John Smith would put no faith in the yellow sands. He declared he was not enamoured of such dirty skill to freight a drunken ship with so much gilded dirt, and he stormed amongst the gold diggers, breathing out these and many other passions, which earned him some enemies. That he was right was proven in the end, for that whole cargo, furnished to Newport with much toil, brought not the value of one copper farthing, so that we had truly our labour for our pains.

At length Newport made ready to sail. With him would go Wingfield, Archer, and Marshall; the two former much against their will, though I question not they were planning to blacken John Smith's fame when London should be reached.

It was the night before the sailing of the ship that

Marshall sought me out in my quarters to tell me farewell. Newport's idling had irked him much, as I knew, but now he was like a man renewed through hope. He sat him down in silence before my fire, for though the spring was upon us, the nights were still somewhat cool.

"I had hoped you would bear me company, Farraday," he presently said.

I took this as a civility, not quite believing him candid in his speech, and he must have read the doubt in my glance, for he continued:

"Nay, I mean neither more nor less than I say; I owe you much, for you have brought hope and purpose into my life, of which I here give you a full acknowledgment."

"God send you quickly reach London," I said, for I was thinking of my darling, and the Maxwells. It was nigh maddening to me when I let my mind run in that direction.

"What would you have me say to her, Farraday?" he asked, turning to me.

"That I pray God she is well," I made answer.

"Tush, Farraday," he broke in, with the shadow of a smile on his bearded lips. "You mean you pray God she be not wed to Nevil Maxwell."

"I pray that, too," I muttered hoarsely, for his speech stung like a lash.

"If she is her mother's daughter her hand will never go to him who has not already won her heart, let Maxwell storm and bully as he choose; you may take that sop of comfort, Master Farraday," and he gave me a grim smile.

"That I know, too," I said, and I had every reason for believing this, for I would have declared my very life depended on it.

"Well, and what shall I say to her as coming from you?" he asked, after a moody silence.

"That never for one moment have I ceased to think of her."

"Is that all?" he questioned drily.

"And that the thought of her has added a thousand-fold to the sorrow and the joy of my life here."

"So it must, Farraday; there has been the one experience we have had in common." And he looked at me with kinder eyes, I thought. He fell to staring into the red embers on the hearth, then he said: "I shall not put one word in your way, Farraday; this is for her to decide, I have naught to do with it. Does that give you good content?"

"Yes, for I have never known where to have you," I cried.

He laughed shortly, but, as I thought, not without a certain weary bitterness to his brief mirth.

"Do you think it a light matter that I have but found my child to lose her?" he demanded, fixing his dark eyes upon me in sadness.

I had no answer ready for this, and so was silent. He went on, dropping his voice to a whisper.

"I can never live in England until times change again; I go back now at the risk of my life. I doubt if you would live elsewhere, so she must make choice of which it will be—and her choice is already made."

"So you will not hazard remaining in England?"

"Not a day longer than necessary; I go about there with a noose fitted to my neck. I have almost come to the resolution to return hither when my mission over seas is accomplished, for Newport brings word that the king has under advisement the granting of a fresh charter to the colony, by which land may be held here on the same tenure as in England. I would not put it past his blessed majesty to be even generous with what does not belong to

him—eh, Farraday? Once he starts to reckless giving of another's goods, who knows there may not come a time when the Emperor Powhatan will lack for that scant six feet of earth we all must needs lie down upon in the end!"

At any other time I might have combated his cynic sophistries, since any man of clear moral sense must know that a Christian king can do no better for righteousness' sake than rescue a land from its pagan people; indeed, the earth and the fulness thereof is the Lord's, which I take it gives as clear a title to such countries as these as any man could wish. But I had only to bethink me of Mary to be tender and compassionate of Marshall's faults of logic and belief. He spoke again in the silence I was maintaining.

"Beyond a doubt you have so much the best of me in this matter, Farraday, I can only look upon myself as your ambassador. That I can tell her you still live, will be my chief claim on her love. Knowing this I cannot say I shall not again sail hither with Newport when the times comes. A broken man, whom it has pleased God should outlive the many things I have outlived, might do worse than cast his lot wholly in this new land."

In very sorrow for him I burst out something about not minding where I lived, for on the spur of the moment I could have sworn that in spite of famine, sickness, and the savages, Virginia was the most agreeable spot in the world to me; but he put my words aside by a gesture.

"I had not thought to bring her hither, and you have friends and kindred in England, do you not forget that?"

He quitted his stool.

"Must you go so soon?" I asked, for it came upon me with a kind of shock that I had said nothing of what lay nearest my heart.

"It is nearing midnight, I daresay, and I sleep aboard

ship to-night since Newport weighs anchor at break of day. If we do not meet again——” and he made as if to hold out his hand.

But I told him I would walk with him to the shore.

It was long past the early bedtime we of James Town kept, for no gleam of light came from the huddle of huts. In silence we went from the fort and presently gained the shore, where two sailors with one of the ship's boats were waiting Marshall's coming.

“God keep you, Farraday!” said Marshall as he took my hand.

And as well as the lump that had quickly come into my throat would allow, I wished him a safe and speedy voyage. Then he stepped aboard the boat and the sailors pushed off from the shore. But I stood on the sands long after I had ceased to hear the splash of oars.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

NOT long after Newport sailed we were happily surprised by the arrival of the *Phoenix*, which we had given up for lost. Her master was Captain Francis Nelson, a very expert mariner, yet such had been the leewardness of his ship that though he had come to within sight of Cape Henry, he had been forced so far to sea by gales and contrary winds that his next landfall was one of the West Indian Isles, where he had been glad enough to make a safe harbour and repair his ship. He was a man of different sort from Newport, and he had so managed his stores whilst at the West Indies, causing the Islands to feed his people, that he brought us a great quantity of victual.

He spent no great time at James Town, but took a cargo of cedar wood, in preference to Newport's yellow sands, and was ready to depart. With him went John Smith's "True Relation of Virginia," that was afterward printed at the Greyhound in Paul's Churchyard, which I believe to have been the first book written in English in this new land, and mayhap the first written in any tongue whatsoever.

With Captain Nelson sailed John Martin, and I think we were none of us sorry to bid him God-speed on his way, for what between the poor health he had known since his arrival in Virginia, and his mind constantly running on treasure, he had proved himself a mighty unserviceable colonist.

And now with the good ships dropped down the river to lose themselves betwixt the wooded shores, we came back

sharply to our own concerns. We were some hundred and thirty men of divers sorts and conditions to be fed and housed. What between the fire and our augmented numbers, John Smith took me into his cabin to live with him, rather than I should have a house-mate of an indifferent sort; thus by a little crowding here and there, all were given shelter. As for our stores, we had sufficient to last six months, beyond which time our fields and gardens must feed us, with what there was to be got from the savages in trade or by our huntsmen and fishermen from the woods and river.

That summer we made two voyages of discovery with John Smith to command us. We explored the Chesapeake, and discovered the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers, together with many lesser streams that sent their waters into the great bay. In all we journeyed some three thousand miles, for the most part in an open boat, exposed to winds and storms and the constant menace of shipwreck.

Now one might have thought that our silly president who had so barely escaped being sent home in disgrace along with Wingfield and Archer, would have taken the lesson to heart; but not he—for when we reached James Town, early in September, we found the settlement in a state of mutiny.

Ratcliffe had riotously consumed the stores, and as if to put a period to his follies, which were well-nigh incredible, was having built for himself a pleasure house in the woods near the fort. But for our timely arrival I know not what revenge the colonists would have wreaked upon him for his misgovernment and extravagance. Now, however, they contented themselves with deposing him from all office, and by popular acclaim chose John Smith to rule in his stead.


These matters had brought us to the end of summer, and with the first cool days of autumn came Captain Newport again. He arrived off James Town most unexpectedly, a light wind with a favouring tide and a yellow harvest moon having made it possible for him to continue up the river to his old anchorage even when day failed him. We knew naught of his presence so close at hand until the booming of his culverins took us quickly out into the night, doubtful whether it would be one of the London Company's ships or some wandering Spaniard getting the range for his guns before he battered the fort to pieces about our ears.

"I'll hazard that it's Newport!" cried Smith. "Come, Dick, we will board him, for the feeling is strong with me that he brings those looked-for letters."

Very presently, with Percy, Gosnold, and Matthew Scrivener, we put off from the shore in one of the small boats, and were soon mounting the ship's side, with the bearded faces of the sailors who were clustered along the bulwark looking down upon us.

On the quarter-deck, standing within the circle of light cast by the ship's great lanthorn, which was suspended from the rigging, we came on Newport; gallant and handsome he looked in a slashed doublet and ruff, with a fine dress sword on his hip, and the rich lace of his cuffs falling about his ringed fingers. In this finery he had more the look of a city buck than a mariner.

The reason of his brave display was soon made clear to us, for coming from the little quarter-deck group of which he was the foremost figure we now caught amongst the harsher speech of men the sound of a woman's voice. On the instant my head turned light, though I knew full well the voice was one I had never heard until that moment. Nor was I the only one affected, for a swift silence



had fallen on us all, and we turned with one accord to see the speaker, whereat Newport laughed.

"'Fore God, Mistress Forrest," cried he, "you have spoilt their very eagerness for such year-old news as we bring!"

And with that he gaily presented us to Mistress Forrest and her husband, who had come out to join the colony.

I daresay I was not alone in wishing she would not take too much notice of me then, for I was wonderfully conscious of torn and soiled clothes, whilst I bethought me, with the pang one always has in repining a lost opportunity, that I had not visited the barber in some weeks; by all of which symptoms one may know that Mistress Forrest was a young and comely woman, and I doubted not our Virginia Eden would straightway take on an air of such high fashion as our depleted wardrobes would allow.

And while we bowed very low before Mistress Forrest, wishing her to know how much better our manners were than our doublets, she spoke very sweetly to us, leaning on her husband's arm, and we one and all felt highly honoured to know this brave lady and to be the first to welcome her to Virginia.

Then Newport, keeping up his gay manner, said if we had but given him time he would have paid his respects to the president on shore, by which we thought he had reference to Ratcliffe, and we looked toward John Smith, esteeming it his place to explain that our some time president was shorn of those honours which were too great a burden for him, and was living in disgrace. Newport was quick to grasp the situation, or mayhap he had sensed the change when we came aboard without Ratcliffe.

"Captain Smith," said he, with a great show of friendliness, "let me be first to congratulate you, for I bring you letters patent appointing you President of Virginia."

This was welcome news indeed, and Percy, Gosnold, and Scrivener raised a cheer, to which I added my voice, whilst Mistress Forrest clapped her white hands. Then Captain Newport brought forward for Smith to meet two very well-appearing gentlemen, Captain Waldo and Captain Wynne, who had been named for the Virginia Council. They were old soldiers and they were more than gracious in their speech to that young soldier, the bruit of whose honestly acquired fame had reached them in England.

Presently Smith and Newport excused themselves to go to the latter's cabin, leaving the rest of us to talk to Mistress Forrest and her husband. Not many minutes elapsed, however, when Smith came from the cabin and hurried to my side. In his hand I saw a bulky package, which he thrust into mine.

"The letters, Dick!" said he. "Pray God they contain nothing but the best of good news for you!"

Now I wished only to be alone with my grief or joy, as it might prove to be, so I made my farewells to the lady, and going forward, found a place in one of the ship's boats that was putting off for the fort.

Holding fast to the precious parcel which meant so much to me, I made all speed from the landing place to my quarters. When I had closed my door, for I wished to secure myself against the chance of interruption, I took my seat beside the table, and drawing the lanthorn close, tore off the outer wrappings of the package, which I had noticed was addressed in my father's hand. I own my fingers shook so as to be well-nigh useless for this labour, as well they might, since that was one of the supreme moments in my life. A sight of the half dozen letters which made up my budget reassured me at once, and such rich content and comfort as I had been a stranger to in long months came to me.

The first letter I took up was written by my father in London the day before Newport sailed for Virginia. He bade me be of good heart, assuring me that my mother and all were well, and that Mary was at Dane's Hill. This was but a hasty line penned at the last moment, he explained, and I would learn by the other letters he was sending all that had happened.

Possessed of these facts, which made my heart leap for joy and left me with a deep sense of thankfulness, I went soberly at work to get all the news of those whose welfare meant so much to me, and I found myself speedily transported into the midst of such love and tenderness by the mere magic of those written words that the James Town of that moment, with its influx of strangers, the sound of whose voices beyond my door was filling the night, seemed to become as unreal as any dream. My letters were a most complete relation of those happenings that had followed my sudden and mysterious disappearance, with such items of home news as might serve to fill in the gaps between the more momentous events. Indeed, I doubt if Dane's Hill in all its three centuries of habitation had ever before so given itself to penmanship.

There was a letter from my dear mother, who rarely touched a pen, as I knew, writing being to her a task of extraordinary difficulty, which made it seem the greater honour that she should have written me. Then Betty, whom I had never known to write ten lines without she complained of a cramped hand, had written ten full pages, spelling her way very bravely through them, and on the last page signing herself, "Elisabeth Preston," quite large, and with an ostentatious flourish; and then to make sure I should not be in any doubt as to just who this Elisabeth Preston was, she had put "Farraday" very small just below the Preston, which gave a certain confidential air

to her signature, as if imparting something in a whisper. In with her letter was folded a scrawled page or two from Tom, who subscribed himself my affectionate brother, from which I guessed his verse-writing days were over, or at least they were like to be mingled with such plain prose as is apt to come into the lives of most.

But I turned to my father and Mary for an account of those matters in which I felt the most immediate concern, namely, how Mary chanced to be at Dane's Hill, and what had become of Captain Maxwell and Lady Bellesly. As I read deeper into the written pages I came to an understanding of all that had been done since my somewhat hasty and wholly involuntarily voyage to Virginia. Mary had been well-nigh distraught by my failure to keep my tryst at the garden gate that day that should have been our wedding day. Jarvis, the coachman, had watched during the night in Aldersgate Street by the mouth of the lane, thinking I must surely sooner or later appear; but I had not appeared, and in the morning she had sent him to my inn to make inquiries concerning me. He had returned not much wiser than he went, having only learned that I had quitted the Three Tuns early on the day previous and had not since been seen. So far Mary had no suspicion as to what had really happened to me, but now Jarvis advanced the theory that I had been foully dealt with, and he suspected Captain Maxwell of having had a hand in the matter.

In the meantime, with the coachman's connivance, for she was closely watched, she had despatched a letter to my father telling him of my disappearance. A fortnight had now elapsed, and Mary, in a state of desperation not hard to conceive and with no confidant save only that hard-featured coachman, who was so much better than he looked, was rendered yet more hopeless by Lady Bellesly's sud-



denly announced intention of closing the house in Aldersgate Street and going into the country; where, she would not say. Perhaps it was all a trick to prevent Mary from seeing my father should he come to London in quest of me; at any rate, if this was my lady's purpose, it was like to prove successful.

But Mary had no mind to be utterly cut off from those in whose love she had most confidence. Counting on Jarvis' devotion, she now boldly resolved to run away. How it was all managed the letters did not tell, but on the very night before Lady Bellesly's intended departure for the country Mary and Jarvis, well mounted on excellent horses that trusty fellow had purchased for their use, rode out of London and turned their faces toward the north.


Without their knowing it they passed my father midway of their journey as he posted south, and reached Dane's Hill only some few hours in advance of Captain Maxwell's coming, for he had guessed aright what Mary's goal would be, and had been quick to follow her north. He was a formidable antagonist for that household of women folk to deal with, and his threats as to what would surely happen to my father and mother if they harboured the runaway did not fail in their effect, since Mary began to fear that she was but bringing ruin on those she loved best; indeed, she was on the point of agreeing to go with him in spite of my mother's protesting.

This turn of affairs sent Betty forth to find Tom Preston, who was mooning about the place, as was usual with him. She has told me since she was mighty doubtful as to just the sort of champion Tom would prove himself to be in this crisis, yet when she had told him something of what was going forward indoors, Tom got very red in the face, so that she thought he was having some sort of a fit; then he began to swear terribly, which seemed to take the blood

out of his face, leaving him with a proper pallor. Between his strong talk he ordered Betty to run and fetch up the men from the stables, as he might wish to show them a little sport, by which she knew he had the horse-pond in mind should Maxwell prove unmanageable. Then, no more regarding her, he strode into the house, looking very fierce for a poet, and with that cold blood of his at the boiling point and fairly bubbling, as it should be with a man who expects not to lose his temper more than once or twice in a lifetime.

He wasted no breath on civilities he did not feel, but ordered Captain Maxwell out of the house and from off Dane's Hill farm; moreover, he declared that Mary should not quit that spot, and he denounced Maxwell's threats and his laws as so much nonsense, which he would find it extremely hard to execute. In all of which Tom was quite honest, for he was bred of a long line of cattle-lifting gentry that feared neither man nor devil, and boasted even less respect for the law, unless it chanced to be on their side, when they were great sticklers.

Maxwell had counted on having only women to deal with, for in the village he had acquainted himself with the lay of the land and knew that my father was several days gone on his journey to London, so our Betty's suitor, with his truculent speech, was in the nature of a sore surprise. It could not have mended matters from his point of view when Tom's support, smelling strong of the stable, crowded into the room. No doubt he realised that there was very little law in that part of England, and that the little there was would unquestionably be on Tom's side. At any rate, he was glad to make his escape from Dane's Hill with a whole head, and retired to the village; but Tom was too much of a general to grant a routed enemy a respite in which to get his second wind. As a masterpiece of strat-



egy, he organised such a demonstration before the inn where Maxwell was lodged, and was so handsomely supported by the village, that the Captain evidently considered it the part of discretion to continue his retreat, and some time after nightfall rode south, to be no more seen in the neighbourhood of Dane's Hill.

My father spent long days in London on that bootless quest of his, and at last returned to Dane's Hill utterly disheartened by the black wall of mystery that had everywhere confronted him. Meanwhile Tom, who had taken up his quarters at the farm, which he was prepared to defend against all comers, arrived at the conviction from his talks with Mary that if they were ever to know what had become of me a confession must be got from Maxwell, who he never doubted had managed the whole business of my disappearance. He offered to go to London himself and have it out of him, and in the end he and my father journeyed to town together.

While they did not meet with Maxwell, they did find Selwyn, who was frank to admit that his relation with Maxwell had recently undergone a change, this former client having tricked him, as he averred, in some venture in which they had shared. He even went so far as to intimate that Maxwell knew of what had befallen me, and that I was not dead, but further than this he was ignorant. As to where Maxwell was, Selwyn would only say that he had reason to believe he was sojourning in Paris. So to Paris went my father and the faithful Tom, the latter nursing I know not what desperate project; and perhaps it is just as well they did not pull down their quarry.

They were still in France when my letters reached Dane's Hill; of these my mother despatched copies to my father, but ere they arrived in France he and Tom had set out on their journey homeward, so that it was not until he reached

Dane's Hill that he knew where I was, and that if I was to be got out of Virginia he must negotiate with the London Council. He hurried to London again, only to arrive there after Newport had sailed for Virginia.

And now I came to the very end of my letters, and could see that my father was in some anxiety concerning me; for on Newport's arrival with those artful maligners, Wingfield and Archer, there had been created in the Council a considerable party hostile to Smith and his friends, and I being numbered amongst these latter, the Council had refused to release me until my term of service should have expired.

I own this was something I had not expected. It seemed such a needless hardship, and I was left blank and down in the mouth; yet I could only smile when I read where my dear father in his anxiety begged me to be careful and guarded in the friendships I made, and on no account to commit myself to any designing person; in particular I was to have a care of one John Smith.

At this juncture the door swung open, and in came John Smith himself.

"They are well, Dick?" he asked.

"Thank God, yes! But I do not go back with Newport," I said.

He nodded.

"I know, Dick. You have Wingfield and Archer to thank for that, and probably Newport himself, though of course he does not say so." He dropped down beside me. "'Tis agreeable enough no doubt to be President of Virginia, but these are the miracles the London Council would have us perform: We must find a lump of gold; we must return to England one of Raleigh's lost colonists of Roanoke, and we must penetrate beyond the mountains to the South Sea! Failing, we are to remain as banished men."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

FOR Powhatan the London Company had sent a gilt crown and scarlet robe, together with a very splendid bed and its furniture. Newport's first desire was to bestow these gifts, so I went with John Smith to invite the Emperor to James Town. But the old pagan would have none of the proposed courtesy except on his own terms. He was a king, he told Smith: let Newport come to him with his presents; nor could Smith shake him out of his resolution.

So in the end Newport pocketed his dignity and marched to Werowocomoco with some fifty men as a guard of honour. When the bed was set up with its furniture, Powhatan was vastly tickled by it, having it straightway moved into the Great Lodge that his people might view it. With the bed off our hands, we set about the business of the coronation. The Emperor donned the scarlet robe, but could not comprehend the significance of the crown, nor would he kneel to have it put upon his head; yet Smith and Newport, by dint of leaning on his shoulders, got his body a little inclined, when Percy and Francis West—brother to the Lord De la Warr—who had been watching their chance, dexterously placed it upon his shaven pate, and I, at a word from Smith, fired off my pistol, a sign to our fifty men to let fly a complimentary volley. This volley the Emperor did not at all understand, but thinking we designed some treachery, fell into a great terror, which we had much ado to allay; but at length he recovered his composure and bestowed on us his old skin robe and moc-


casins, which he bade us convey to his brother of England in token of his love and esteem.

Newport now marched into the country of the Monacans, beyond the falls of the James, to find gold and the South Sea. He found neither, and returned to James Town with the most of his people ill and footsore, to quarrel with John Smith, which I could have told him was an occupation yielding neither profit nor pleasure. Perhaps he counted on triumphing where all others had failed, yet he quickly came to his senses when Smith gave him a taste of his temper, telling him if he troubled him more he would surely hold him prisoner and send his ship home to England without him.

His quarrel with the new president brought Newport's stay to an end, and he shortly afterward sailed for England, taking with him Ratcliffe, and the harsh message from Smith that Ratcliffe was only a poor, counterfeit imposter, and that he had been sent home lest the colonists should cut his throat.

We were now some two hundred strong at James Town, to be wintered and fed, and the struggle for food became as keen as ever it was, for shortly after he sailed we found that an army of rats had landed from Newport's ships and had well-nigh consumed what corn we had in store. Smith, to meet our need, marched into Powhatan's country, though he had been warned by friendly natives that the chiefs there were thirsting for his blood.

It was while we were absent that Matthew Scrivener, with Captain Waldo, Anthony Gosnold, and eight others, would visit the Isle of Hogs, where we had established the pigs Newport had brought us, that they might gain their own living. On their way thither their boat sank, all being lost. This happened in the depth of winter, when there was much ice in the river, and it was the savages who found



the bodies of our comrades where wind and tide had rudely tumbled them ashore, and brought the news of their grim finding to the fort.

Meanwhile we had got our corn, though to achieve this it had been necessary to affright Powhatan well, while with Opechancanough, one of his under-kings, Smith even used some violence to bring him to his senses, for he seized him by his scalp lock and dragged him forth from his hut, and then in the very midst of some hundreds of his warriors clapped a pistol to his head, threatening to blow out his brains unless corn was speedily forthcoming. Now, I dare say, there be more polite methods of encouraging trade, but I vow I know of none more stimulating to a heathen person who had been but trifling the time away to cut one's throat. Opechancanough promised corn, and his people, who had been silently gathering to attack us, made diligent haste to freight our boats. It was plain they only wished us to depart.

In this fashion we got victual sufficient to last us until next harvest, and we had leisure to make James Town more safe and habitable for our people. Knowing as we did to our sorrow the evil that came of drinking the river water in summer time, we dug a well in the fort which yielded excellent sweet water in abundance; we put a new roof on our church, and built some twenty houses. All this was done in the late winter, and the work had been carried on so briskly, now Smith was our ruler, that after we had done these things we found time before the spring opened to build a blockhouse to guard the approach to our town from the mainland. In this we installed a garrison, and here for the future all trade with the savages was carried on under the eye of the officer in command. This put a stop to two crying evils: the secret trade in arms with the savages and their petty thefts.

Next we dug and planted some forty acres, and to yet further secure ourselves built a second blockhouse on the Isle of Hogs, where a watch was installed, whose duty it was to guard the live stock and give us at James Town notice of any shipping in the river. We also began the building of a stone fort for a retreat in case we should ever chance to be strongly assailed from the water front. This new fort was over toward the York River on a high hill, very hard to be come at and correspondingly easy of defence.

Work upon it was well advanced, and I, being one of the party of soldiers under command of Sergeant Jeffrey Abbot, who had been guarding the labourers, had gone to James Town to make a report to Captain Smith of how the work progressed. I reached James Town a little before nightfall and found him in company with a stranger, a grizzled fellow in the dress of a mariner. A few words served to explain that this was Captain Samuel Argall, who had come out to Virginia on a private trading expedition and to fish for sturgeon, and that his ship lay down the river, where the wind had failed him.

"Though not sent out by the London Company, but coming on his own business to truck and fish, Captain Argall yet brings us news," said Smith, but his glance was troubled, and I knew that his interview with Argall had not been wholly pleasant.

"Another time, Captain Smith," said the latter, making as if to quit his seat.

"Say on. I mind not Master Farraday's presence," said Smith.

"The London Company is bitter that the enterprise should have been so scant of profit," said Argall, grinning.

"What have I to do with that? Can I find them their fantastical gold where there is none, and South Seas where

they do not exist?" demanded Smith, with some show of impatience.

"'Tis your hard dealings with the savages, and not sending the ships home freighted that vexes the Company," rejoined Argall.

I thought this a bitter thing to say to John Smith, who had so many times saved the colony from utter extinction, yet he took it with a calmness he sometimes lacked under censure.

"The sooner the Council learns that the only profits here will be got out of steady labour, the better for the pockets of all. Instead of a reasonable ordering of things, they have kept us running hither and yon after marsh fires; and what manner of people do they send us? Why, men more fit to spoil a commonwealth than either to begin or help to maintain one! As for my hard dealings with the savages, 'tis the only way I know to manage them; and even so, no wanton injury has been done them."

Master Argall sucked at his pipe and regarded Smith out of shrewd eyes. He presently said:

"Sir, I can give you this further word, there is a new charter got from the King. The bounds of the colony will be extended; moreover, the London Council will in future be chosen by the Company and not by the King."

"That is by no means unfair," said Smith.

"A new commission will serve. You are to be removed from office, Captain Smith." And Argall seemed to take pride in the fact that he was the bearer of evil tidings.

"If the need of me is past I am willing to make way for another," rejoined Smith quietly.

"Pray God they send one who can shoulder the load!" I could not forbear to cry, but Argall went on unheeding the interruption.

"Lord De la Warr is already appointed Captain-Gen-

eral of Virginia, with Sir Thomas Gates for his lieutenant. Sir George Somers will be Admiral; Christopher Newport Vice-Admiral; Sir Thomas Dale, High Marshal; and Sir Ferdinando Wainman, General of the Horse. This, Captain Smith, is the news I bring."

Again Argall fell to sucking his pipe in silence, regarding Smith out of his hawk eyes. Smith threw himself back in chair and burst into a roar of laughter.

"God save us!" cried he. "And where will the worshipful knight find his horse—or will he ride a broomstick like any witch?"

"These noble gentlemen have brought such great sums of money into the venture that fleets and armies will be forthcoming if the need arise," said Argall.

"Fleets and armies! Man, our first necessity is food—then you may talk of fleets and armies. In the meantime those honourable gentlemen with their high-sounding titles will cut but a sorry figure bartering trinkets with the savages for handfuls of corn," retorted Smith.

Argall knocked the ashes from his pipe.

"If you will show me where I may quarter myself and my boat's crew until my ship gets up the river, Captain Smith, I will look to my men," said the sailor.

"You shall do Master Farraday and me the honour to lodge here; for your men, there are quarters close by," said Smith

Argall, with his hook beak of a nose and his roving eye which nothing escaped, remained with us during the first months of summer. This was part choice and part necessity, for John Smith appropriated his stores for the use of the colony, the loss to be made good when the London Company's ship arrived.

We had been anxiously looking for this ship since the first spring days, but the slow weeks had dragged on until

it was midsummer, with never sight of a sail on our river. I was now stationed at the glass house, near a mile from James Town, where certain of our Dutchmen and Poles, agreeable to the orders of our masters in London, were experimenting with making glass.

It was one hot August noon, with scarce a breath of wind astir and all living things silent in the vast forest, when I heard the distant roar of an alarm gun from the fort. I called to the glassmakers to follow, and snatching up my musket plunged into the woods. My feet found the narrow path that, in spite of its twistings and turnings, led very direct to the fort; along this I ran, hearing at intervals the thunder of the gun that was calling in the men who were scattered abroad at their various occupations.

When I came within sight of the blockhouse that guarded the approach from the mainland, I heard the drums beating to quarters, and then, almost on the instant, there came such a booming of guns as I verily believe had never until then sounded in that part of the world. I wondered if we were being attacked by the Spaniards, for the fear of this was always more or less present in our minds.

What had happened I soon learned. A barge that had gone down the river that morning had made out a great array of ships entering Warrasqueake Bay. This had sent the barge back to James Town as fast as oars could drive her, her people in a panic, for we looked for no such mighty fleet to visit us from England. Captain Smith had ordered the alarm gun fired, and had mustered his men, and was even preparing to open on the foremost ship with his culverins.

I made my way to the platform where he stood viewing the approaching fleet. A sight more inspiring it

would have been difficult to conceive, as fitful puffs of wind and a steady tide sent the vessels forward, until from about the distant wooded point had appeared seven ships, great and small, each under its cloud of snowy canvas, while from the dark hulls came the constant roar of guns to salute that little band of Englishmen who had mustered behind those palisades to give, if need be, a welcome with shotted culverins, though it suited our humour to answer with blank charges.

"Come, gentlemen," said Smith to those who stood about him, "we will meet them at the river landing."

Perhaps he expected to greet Lord De la Warr, or Sir Thomas Gates; if so, he was destined to a grievous disappointment, for in the first boat that reached shore was Captain Ratcliffe, and with him were Archer and Martin. The latter came up to Smith and civilly shook hands, but Ratcliffe and Archer brushed past him without a word.

"The gage of battle!" said Smith to me as they passed out of ear-shot. "Eh, Dick, I begin to think we should have fared better had it been Jack Spaniard himself."

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

THE seven ships which safely arrived at James Town brought the ill-tidings that Captain Newport's vessel, the *Sea Venture*, which was the Admiral of the fleet, and aboard of which was stowed the chest which contained all the documents, bills of lading, letters, and such like, was a-missing.

The fleet had been caught in a great storm some eight days before a landfall was made, and Newport's ship, together with a small catch, were never afterward seen. Thus we lost our private home news and upward of one hundred and fifty colonists, to say naught of the mariners who belonged to the ship and catch. Among those we now counted as drowned men were Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers, and this bred utter confusion in James Town, since they were the bearers of the new commission, to whom had been committed the destinies of the settlement pending the arrival of the Lord De la Warr himself.

The knowledge that I must needs wait until our new Governor-General should reach Virginia for any letters from Dane's Hill smote me a harder blow than I can say, and I hid a gloomy face in my own quarters. Soon John Smith came in looking mighty perturbed for him.

"Canst listen to my plaint, Dick?" said he; then his knit brows relaxed. "Man, we are a pretty pair—you with your private griefs and I with my public burdens!"

"What do the shipmasters tell you?" I asked.

"They bring us some live stock, which shows the London Company is gaining in wisdom, and upward of three

hundred colonists. A few are Dutchmen and Poles, the rest for the most part broken gentlemen, shopkeepers, and serving men, whom neither the fear of God, shame, nor the displeasure of their friends could rule at home, so there is small hope even to bring one in twenty to be better minded where these influences are removed." And Smith dropped into a chair at my side.

"And who will rule until Lord De la Warr arrives, should the *Sea Venture* prove to be lost?"

"They are already discussing that very point, Dick, and seemingly they are in some doubt; but just there I have so much the better of them, for I am not in doubt. For unless the bearers of the new commission arrive to call in the old, I promise you this: I will serve out my year of office, let them look to it who would stop me!" said John Smith in no uncertain tones.

"Bravo!" I cried.

"You may guess it, Ratcliffe and Archer have been busy with this new importation; they have painted me in no colours but black. Martin has told me this, for he is not such an evilly disposed fellow; it is only that he is a weak-headed ass!" Smith came to a weary pause.

"And I doubt not Ratcliffe knows of your message to the London Council that 'he is naught but a poor counterfeit imposter,' and that you sent him home 'lest the company should cut his throat,'" I said.

"I hope that knowledge does not irk him, God knows it was not the tithe of what I could have said concerning him, but I wished to spare—not his—but the worshipful Council's sensibilities."

"'Tis a pity you restrained yourself, since we have him back," I observed.

"Aye, Dick; but I could not foresee that. Of this, however, there can be no doubt: by far the greater num-

ber of our new colonists hated ere they clapped eyes on me. To make them love me the more, I will presently take such measures as shall lay the master rogues by the heels. I am but withholding my hand lest I grip the wrong ones. It will be a monstrous pity, if with the backing the old settlers can give me, I do not get the better of all evilly disposed persons."

Now truly there was never more confusion than was bred within the space of the next eight and forty hours; for what with the landing of colonists, live stock, and supplies, and the disorder, over-crowding, and inconvenience incident to such work being done in such a place in the very heated time of summer, life in our little town became well-nigh unbearable in its best aspect even; but there was added to all this the insubordination of Ratcliffe and Archer, until it looked as if the madness of our own mood would destroy us where famine, fever, and the arrows of the savages had as yet failed.

An unruly mob that carped at all orders and was prepared for argument but never for obedience, tramped in and out our narrow streets, led by Ratcliffe and Archer, who never ceased to denounce John Smith as having usurped those powers they would fain have exercised themselves. They had a thousand reasons, all lawful, why the old commission under which he served should be called in. Indeed, as far as law and logic could be made to serve, they utterly abolished John Smith. In spite of which, John Smith kept to his task of bringing order out of the confusion that everywhere prevailed.

Not only had we our colonists to deal with, but there were the sailors from the ships, who spent much time idling ashore, or in drinking at the tavern which had been set up in the fort, and which was now well stocked with strong waters. It was plain that something must be done to rid

us of the glut of men that swarmed everywhere, and I was not surprised when Smith told me he had resolved to send Master Francis West, with an hundred and twenty of the best of the newcomers, to the falls at the top of our river, there to establish themselves.

There was some grumbling when this order was made known, but in the end hopes of South Sea treasure prevailed, and Master West got safely away with his company. At the same time Martin, with near as large a following, was despatched down river to Nansemond, on the south shore, to form a settlement. I now began to see that there was some craft in John Smith's management of affairs. He had disposed of above two hundred of the most troublesome of our new colonists, which sensibly took the edge off Ratcliffe's mutiny, though the latter was apparently loath to admit it even to himself, for in proportion as his fortunes waned he became the more noisy in his denunciations of Smith; but this endured not for long, for Smith now had leisure to deal with his traducers, and he promptly lodged both Ratcliffe and Archer in the upper room of our new blockhouse, there to await his pleasure.

But Smith's mind misgave him as to how Master West and his people fared at the top of the river, and he no sooner had Ratcliffe and Archer under arrest than he set forth to visit the new settlement.

When we reached the falls we found the pinnacle which had been used to convey the stores up from James Town anchored in midstream, and her master told us that he had not yet discharged his cargo. On going ashore we discovered the company idling under temporary shelters built close by the margin of the river, where 'twas plain the spring tides must reach them. We got but a rude welcome, and sullen and uncommunicative the settlers followed Smith about as he inspected the foundation they had made

for themselves. When he demanded the reason for this or that, they had only churlish replies to give, and it was plain discontent was present, and mutiny not far off.

We spent that night aboard our boat, since West's settlers made no proffer of hospitality. Had I been John Smith I would have had no more to do with those who so little merited consideration; however, his charity as well as his sense of duty was of a tougher fibre than mine, for at break of day we hid our boat in the mouth of a small creek and set off inland to parley with the Emperor for his own town of Powhatan.

This affair was so well managed that the old pagan disposed of houses, corn land, and many square miles of territory, in return for which we were to help him against his enemies, the Monacans, when needful, and give him so many pounds' weight of copper. This treaty successfully concluded, we set out again for West's fort, thinking only how we were the bearers of the best of good tidings, since we had secured for the company a town finely located and ready furnished with houses. But those silly asses would not hear to quitting West's fort; indeed, they began to arm themselves, claiming the country as their own, and saying they would keep out whom they chose. Now, they numbered some hundred and twenty men all told, which far exceeded our strength, so we got to our boat, and Smith ordered us to lay the pinnace aboard.

"Now," said he, as we gained the deck, "we have their provisions, and if hunger does not bring them to their senses, I despair of ever ruling them. One thing certain, the first high tide, with a proper wind a-blowing, will send their brush huts adrift. I look for famine and flood to work for me!"

While we remained aboard the pinnace, for we durst not venture ashore in the vicinity of West's fort, Powhatan

sent his envoys to say that those Englishmen were so much worse than the Monacans themselves he wished permission to destroy them, since they stole from cornfields, spoilt gardens, and committed all manner of violence on his people. But to this Smith could not agree, yet when we had waited two days aboard the pinnace in the hope that the mutineers would come to their senses, he ordered the mariners to get under way. The savages, knowing from their spies that we were leaving for down river, instantly flew to arms; some of those thieving Englishmen they surprised in the woods, whom they beat with clubs, others they wounded with arrows; nor did their activity stop with this: they began to gather in great numbers, as if they meditated an attack on the fort itself.

By a fortunate chance the pinnace sailed but half a league when she got aground, and as we waited the turn of the tide we were overtaken by a party of West's settlers. They were in a mighty state of panic and ready for any terms, if Smith would only return and so manage things as to beat off the savages.

Smith's terms were that seven of the ringleaders whom he named should be handed over to him and that the rest would go to the town of Powhatan. This being agreed to, we left the pinnace and hastened back to the fort, where Smith held a counsel with the savages, whose rage he appeased by fair words and presents. Next he set about moving the colonists to Powhatan, where in the course of two days' time we established them right gallantly in a town ready built and sufficiently fortified to have defended them against the attack of all the savages in Virginia. Truly none of us knew of any place in all that country so delightful or well situate, and we christened it anew—Nonsuch. Officers were appointed and the stores aboard the pinnace were made free to the company; yet when they

understood that they were masters of their victuals again, they no longer regarded their promises, but began to debate whether they should remain at Nonsuch or go back to West's fort.

We were in the midst of this wrangle when a messenger arrived from down river with the news that Captain Martin had fared badly at Nansemond, where he had shown such fear of the savages that they had risen against him and several of his men had been slain, which had worked in him such terror that he had abandoned his company and fled to James Town.

Sick at heart and hopeless of doing aught with those at Nonsuch, John Smith now determined to leave them to their fate and hasten back to James Town with all speed, lest worse happen there. We quitted Nonsuch late in the afternoon, taking with us the seven men who had been most forward in the mutiny there.

Now, though I have no proof of what I say, yet I have never thought otherwise than that it would have been far better for John Smith—aye, and for the colony, too—had we left them behind. For just at dawn on the morning of the day following our departure, a bag of gunpowder, which, either by accident or design, had been placed in the stern of the boat where Smith was sleeping, exploded with frightful force, rending his body and setting fire to his clothes, so that he threw himself out of the boat into the river, where he was like to drown.

The noise of the explosion, and his cry of mortal agony as he came awake, roused us all. I made out my friend struggling in the water alongside, his face streaked with powder stains and distorted with suffering. Calling to my startled comrades, I sprang to his rescue.

We lifted him over the side of the boat, not comprehending what it was that had happened; and then as he

came clear of the water we saw his torn side where the force of the powder had spent itself. To know that he suffered the keenest agony one had but to look into his drawn face.

It is true there was lighted match aboard the boat, and it may have been that the fire got to the powder without any man's knowledge or desiring; but whether the result of accident or purposed villainy, the consequences to Smith were the same. All in a moment he was reduced to this pitiful, shattered wreck we had lifted from the river.

We made him as comfortable as could be in the stern of the boat, binding up his hurts with strips torn from our clothing. When we had done, he took me by the hand.

"And you love me, Dick, make what haste you can down stream!" He sought to smile, but the pain which was never to leave him for long days thereafter twisted his lips.

"How did it happen?" I asked.

"The good God, He knows! I accuse no one—only get me quickly to James Town——"

And with this began our heavy toil at the oars, for with the river's turnings we had near a hundred miles to go, and we drove the boat onward day and night with never a pause. Now we fought both wind and tide, and then wind and tide served our turn, helping us down toward the broad water. And through those long hours, which must have been eternities to him, Smith, all uncomplaining, lay under the shelter we had raised above him. Then, at last, across the wide reach of dancing water and beneath a hot September sun, James Town came into sight. And never had its log huts seemed so fair a refuge!

We carried John Smith ashore on the stretcher we had improvised and bore him to his own quarters. Quickly the news of our return went abroad in James Town, and we had

scarce got him within doors when Lieutenant Percy appeared.

"Do you suffer much, Captain Smith?" he asked, going to the wounded man's side.

"I doubt not my days here are at an end!" said Smith.

"God forbid!" cried Percy, drawing back, for what with Smith's words and appearance, he understood him to mean that his hurts were mortal.

Smith went on.

"I need skilful surgery if I am ever to have the use of myself, and for that I must go to England when the ships sail. Yet some honest man, Percy, must be left at the head of affairs or the rogues will come to the front."

"And you think I am that honest man, Captain Smith?" said Percy. "Give me leave to think the matter over."

Then we three spoke together of the accident, and presently John Smith, weighed down by utter weariness, sank into a sort of stupor, and Percy motioned me to follow him from the room.

"What need to tell him, Farraday, that those nimble knaves, Ratcliffe and Archer, are at liberty; you had not been gone five days when their friends accomplished their release, and now they are breathing threats against Smith for their unlawful arrest, as they call it. Martin is back from Nansemond, and those of his men who have escaped the clubs of the savages will soon follow his discreet example. John Smith might bring order to James Town, but a lesser man is sure to fail."

We had walked toward Percy's quarters while he was speaking. Soon we should be caught in the winter's grip, with some five hundred of us to be fed through the long months until we came to another harvest. I saw that the realisation of this was keen in Percy's mind. As we both

knew, he would be a man, and a good one, who could carry the troubled fortunes of the colony to a right issue.

"Whatever is the result here, John Smith must go home when the ships sail," I said at hazard.

"True—which means, Master Farraday, that I must be content to take up his work." And he gave me his hand as I parted from him at his door.

With a heart heavy as lead I turned back toward my quarters. I seemed to get a foretaste of what was before us when Smith should go. The kindly gentleman I had just quitted, with the fever of that low shore ever in his blood, so that for days at a time he could neither go nor stand, had all the value that an honest man must ever have: but James Town called for something more than good intentions from him who would rule it. A strong hand and a heavy fist he must have, with a high courage to take him beyond the sticking at trifles.

I was before my own door now, and paused for an instant, but no sound came from within, so I put my hand upon the wooden latch and the door yielded easily and noiselessly to my touch. As I peered into the room I caught sight of a man standing by my friend's bedside. It might readily have been any one of a score I could have named who were John Smith's trusty partisans, but ere I spoke I saw the unknown raise a hand and the hand go out toward the still figure on the bed. On the instant I hurled myself forward, my fingers closing about the cold steel of a pistol barrel. This I wrenched from the would-be assassin, and before he could speak or cry out I had felled him with a blow. The noise of his heavy fall roused Smith.

"Dick," he muttered, as he came awake.

"Here is one who would have killed you while you slept," I said as I set my foot on the prostrate villain. "I was just in time to spare you a pistol shot."

"Do they hate me so much as that?" he said.

Even in the uncertain light I recognised the fellow I had knocked down as that very stout ruffian, John Laydon. I reached for my sword, intending to make an end of him, but John Smith would not have it.

"Of what use is it, Dick—let him go."

"A good example is never less than a good example," I urged.

"Nay, Dick, I forbid it."

He made as if to rise from his bed, but his hurts would not allow of this, and he sank back groaning aloud for very misery.

"Let him up, Farraday—I command it," he said at length, when he could speak, and with a bad enough grace I drew back, permitting Laydon to come to his feet.

"Master Laydon, what harm have I done you?" Smith asked, following a brief silence.

"Why, nothing truly, and yet you have put many a hard task on me."

"Can you say it was more than I have put on myself?" demanded Smith.

"I would not say that," answered the fellow sullenly, after a little pause.

"You may go," said Smith, turning from him; and Laydon passed out into the twilight, saved for a punishment beyond any I had purposed.

Smith now bade me fetch a light, and a little later when we had eaten our supper Percy came to say that he would abide in James Town until our new rulers arrived.

"Then I must see the fleet Captain and take orders to sail with him," said Smith.

"By your leave, I will do that for you," said Percy, quitting his chair.

And after he left us John Smith would talk very wisely

to me; speaking of the future, and how he wished we might meet again, and then of those hardships we had faced together; and he let me see that he had as honest a liking for me as one man may have for another, which made the thought of his going seem like the thought of death. I think he knew that even if he survived his hurts he would not return to Virginia, for he said with melancholy:

“I have broken the ice, and beat the path; but not one foot of ground here, nor the very house I built, nor the ground I dug, is mine!”

At dawn the next day came a message from the fleet Captain to say that since the tide would be favourable for getting his ships down the river, he proposed to sail about twelve of the clock. Smith's private belongings were few, even for a soldier, and I had soon stowed them in his great sea chest. By the time I had finished with this, his soldiers were crowding about the bed where he lay, to say their farewells.

Then with the guns roaring a parting salute, we carried him, very weak and pitiful to look at, aboard the fleet Captain's ship, and as Master Richard Potts, the clerk of the Council afterward wrote:

“Thus we lost him, that in all his proceedings made justice his first guide and experience his second; ever hating baseness, sloth, pride, and indignity, more than any dangers; that never allowed more for himself than his soldiers with him; that upon no danger would send them where he would not lead them himself; that would never see us want what he either had, or could by any means get us; that would rather want than borrow, and starve than not pay; that loved action more than words, and hated falsehood and covetousness worse than death; whose adventures were our lives, and whose loss our deaths.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

WE were now five hundred strong in Virginia, taking count of the women and children, and those of us who were settled at James Town occupied some sixty houses built within a stout stockade not easy to be come at by an enemy and defended by twenty pieces of ordnance. Dependent upon our little capital for their ordering were the settlements at Nansemond and West's fort, with the beginning of a footing at Point Comfort hard by the mouth of the James.

Excepting the stores of victual which we lacked, we were furnished with all things needful for our well being. We boasted upward of an hundred soldiers trained to the country and knowing the language and habitation of the savages, we had three small ships and seven such other boats as were adapted to the navigation of our bays and rivers, there were tools for all kinds of work, nets for fishing, and much land ready cleared. Of muskets and small arms there was an abundance, with plenty of powder, shot, and match in store.

There had been made, too, a respectable advance toward the time when we could maintain ourselves without having to look either to England or the savages; for our live stock had been much increased by the London Company, whose ships had brought us sheep, goats, and horses. One thing only we lacked, and this was the proper managing of our affairs, for as soon as John Smith left, our people regarded nothing but from hand to mouth.

Fifty projects for the support of the colony until the

next harvest or until Lord De la Warr should arrive were discussed and abandoned in a day: Percy fell sick, so that his very life was despaired of, and a dozen presidents clamoured for recognition. Now it was the old commission, now the new, now neither: and like the hogs the devil sheared, our would-be masters produced more noise than wool.

Then to add to our disordered state, came the men from Nansemond whom Martin had abandoned, and a little later West appeared with his men from the top of the river, the savages having turned so resolutely against those new settlers that there seemed no safety for them but behind the stout palisades at James Town. But this was not the worst; the savages, knowing John Smith had left us, changed from being our friends to instantly become our enemies, ready to murder whenever the chance offered.

Our wrangles and bickerings, for we had all turned politicians, took us to the first snows of winter, and as it became clearly manifest that something must be done to fend off a famine, one of our ships, the *Swallow*, freighted with such commodities as the Indians delighted in, was sent down river to truck, but when she had got her cargo of meat and corn, the crew sailed away to look for Spanish treasure ships; but what was the end of this venture no man knows, since the *Swallow* was never more heard of; by which it is judged the villains who manned her earned a proper punishment at the hands of those they had set out to spoil.

When the *Swallow* did not return, it was determined Captain Ratcliffe should take a company and go to Point Comfort to live off the oysters. I was drafted to go with him, and to my own small liking, since to establish a settlement in the dead of winter with such a captain was a task not lightly to be thought of. However, our need followed

us down river, and presently Ratcliffe, tiring of the wretched living to be got from the waters, declared with some bluster he would force trade with Powhatan, that as John Smith had always found it possible to manage the old pagan in like ventures, he could fare as well or better; so nothing would do but we must set forth thirty strong in our barges to seek the Emperor at one of his towns on the banks of the River York.

When we reached the neighbourhood of Werowocomoco, we discovered the savages had been advised of our coming by their runners, for they had gathered along the north shore with the evident purpose to dispute our landing. When this was plain to us in the captain's barge, we rested on our oars and looked toward Ratcliffe to signify what next; but it was apparent he was of several minds in the matter, though doubtless if his vanity had not been involved we should then and there have turned back to Point Comfort with its oysters, so, as if to keep up his courage, which no man knew better than himself was a mighty tender plant, he fell to cursing very stoutly as he ordered us to let the barge drift with the tide.

"Men, what have we here?" he said, after he had scanned the shore for a little time. "I mean yonder heathen waving a cedar branch; I doubt not he intends that as a sign of amity—pull in nearer the shore."

Glancing over my shoulder I saw that the savage in question was one Rawhunt, well known to all the old soldiers and settlers at James Town as a chief of consequence.

"Can you talk to the rogue, Farraday, in his own damnable tongue?" demanded Ratcliffe of me.

"After a fashion, Captain Ratcliffe," I made answer.

"Then let us hear the fashion," he said.

I stood up and called Rawhunt by name, bidding him come nearer. Meantime the barge had been driven in to-

ward the land so that when he gained the water's edge we were separate only a few yards. He still carried in his hand the cedar bough, and apparently he was unarmed. Put into English, this is what passed between us:

First, Rawhunt would know why we were sailing up the York and why we came with such a force of men; did we intend war? I answered him that we had come to truck, and had fetched copper, beads, and knives in abundance to exchange for those supplies of which the villages might have a surplus; also I said I could only wonder that his people had durst to menace us from the shore since there was such love and peace betwixt us. But here that artful heathen outdid me in craft. He answered sadly that it was true there had been much love betwixt us, yet West's settlers at the Falls had robbed his people of their stores, had beat and imprisoned those who stood out against them. Having been informed of all that had taken place there, Powhatan was loath to let so large a party as Captain Ratcliffe's make a landing any place on that shore, lest he be driven forth with all his people to seek a hiding place in the winter woods.

All this I told Ratcliffe, who then had me ask Rawhunt if he would not despatch a messenger to the Emperor with the request that he make it safe for us to appear before him.

Rawhunt said that he would himself go to Werowocomoco, which lay a little further up the shore, but he bade us wait his return where we then were, nor would he by any means agree that we should land; but I think Ratcliffe would have been the last man to order us ashore in the face of even the feeblest opposition, especially if it had been necessary for him to take the lead. In his uncertainty as to what would better be done he welcomed any delay.

Within the space of an hour Rawhunt was back, and as we saw him emerge from the forest we again rowed in close to the land. Powhatan's reply was cunningly devised. His people were weak, and just as they were weak they were in terror of the English, whose strength was so much greater than theirs. For himself, he only desired to end his days in peace and good content with all people, whether Monacans or English, it mattered not.

"But tell him, Farraday, it is trade we want," Ratcliffe broke in impatiently when I had translated this much of Powhatan's message.

So I turned again to Rawhunt, telling him we were not satisfied to go away empty handed. Whereat Rawhunt replied that we should not want for a little corn, and that the Emperor was sending as much as he could spare to the boats, for he desired we should not suffer hunger. He would have us come to Werowocomoco, as many as liked, to feast with him; but our weapons affrighted his people, they killed too quick and too far; if we would but put them aside and come with empty hands we should be welcome.

Now I was not deceived by this speech, and I knew full well how John Smith would have received it, yet Ratcliffe was evidently disposed to think Powhatan was dealing with an open mind, and beyond a doubt it was of prime importance that friendly relations should be re-established with the savages, on whose favours we were so dependent in times of stress; but to put aside our arms which made us so feared in that new land was little short of madness.

"Captain Smith never let the muskets go out of the hands of his men," I said.

As I might have known, my words were unfortunate, for Ratcliffe reddened angrily at mention of him I verily believe he hated beyond all other men.

"Captain Smith was always tilting at windmills, Master

Farraday; I doubt not a man could go from end to end of this country with naked hands," he said.

"And earn a naked pate!" I muttered.

While we were speaking, there appeared on the shore four Indians bearing baskets of corn. This was Powhatan's gift; not sufficient to have relieved our want for more than a day at most, and I saw in this seeming charity only a subtle treachery; this was but the bait for our hungry company. It was plain, however, that I was alone in my mistrust of the Emperor. Another thing I liked not the look of, was that the Indians who had welcomed our approach with yells and menacing gestures, had disappeared, so that there remained only Rawhunt and the four basket bearers, which made me think how they had lost interest in us with more suddenness than was natural.

"Put aside your arms, and run the boats ashore," commanded Ratcliffe with sudden decision.

"Captain Ratcliffe, this is sheer madness!" I cried.

"I will show you, Master Farraday, how little Englishmen need fear naked savages," he said, and I could only curse the stupid company I was forced to keep.

Ratcliffe's plans were quickly made. Five men were to stay with the boats to guard against the theft of our arms, while the rest were to go on with him to Weromocomoco. Now I would fain have used this arrangement to my own advantage by being one of the five men left behind, but Ratcliffe thought otherwise, for when he saw I stuck to my seat, he said:

"Come, Farraday, we will have need of your undoubted skill as an interpreter, and I promise no harm shall come to you."

"Sir, I mistrust these civil heathen do but bring us presents that they may quiet our suspicions, and the easier beat out our brains," I said.

"Two of you lay hold of this stout objector!" roared Ratcliffe, flying into a sudden passion. "He shall visit the Emperor Powhatan whether he will or no!"

But before any could move to obey this command I had stepped ashore and to his side.

"There is no need for that," I said quietly, with a desperate kind of courage. "One surely need not fear to follow where Captain Ratcliffe fears not to lead." And I looked him full in the face.

"'Tis a pity no better test for your courage offers than this. Keep at my heels, and tell yonder pagan to lead the way."

I gave the word to Rawhunt and we moved up from the shore, the savage in advance, close followed by Ratcliffe, in whose footsteps I trod, the remainder of the company straggling forward in such order as they chose.

I was conscious now only of an infinite wonder that those thirty Englishmen, with a vain fool to lead them, should be trifling their lives away in any such silly fashion, as I made no doubt we were doing; and as we entered the leafless woods I kept shifting my glance from right to left expecting each moment to see and hear the savages as they rose from their secret places; but before us the wind that came up cold and raw from the great bay tossed the brown leaves in rustling eddies from our path; save for this and the noise struck out by the booted feet of Englishmen walking heedlessly to their doom, the woods of Werowocomoco yielded only a wide silence.

As we penetrated yet deeper into the forest, our men seemed instinctively to draw closer together, the laggards mended their pace, and there was no longer the bandying of words back and forth. I saw that more than one pair of eyes struggled to pierce far into the wooded vistas that opened at right and left.

In advance of us, with his robe of raccoon skins cast about him, stalked Rawhunt. He had never once turned to see who followed briskly or who lagged, but from the first had held his way in silence, and apparently unobserving. Presently Ratcliffe halted and faced me.

"I like not this," he said with an oath. "Tell Rawhunt to point out whereaway lies Werowocomoco."

But Rawhunt seemed to understand the question without help of mine. He turned with a guttural exclamation, and beckoning Ratcliffe to his side, stretched forth a naked arm as if to indicate where the Emperor's town might be seen through the trees.

"I see nothing but your endless woods," said Ratcliffe, after a moment of eager searching. Again Rawhunt pointed.

"Do you mean there?" asked Ratcliffe, stretching out his arm too. "In that direction I swear there is naught but woods."

While Ratcliffe was yet speaking, Rawhunt had seized his extended wrist and forced his hand aloft until the captain's whole side was exposed, at the same moment the savage's brown right hand came not empty from beneath the ample folds of his robe which fell from his naked shoulders; a passing gleam of sunlight flashed on a wide blade of English make as his hand went out and upward, and twice the knife was buried to the hilt in Ratcliffe's side.

It was all done with such speed and dexterity that though full thirty men must have seen those two blows struck, horror and astonishment held us mute.

I saw Ratcliffe turn a pair of startled, fearful eyes on the savage, and even in that fleeting instant I was certain of the light waning in their depth. Rawhunt released his hold on Ratcliffe's wrist, and the arm dropped heavily at

his side. What purpose controlled him I know not, but our captain, staggering like a drunken man, went forward a step or two, then his knees knocked together and he dropped forward on his face. He was dead; to be remembered in after times only to his dishonour.

Rawhunt sprang away from us, and as he ran he raised the war cry of his people, and a very gruesome and nerve racking sound it had that day as it echoed through the leafless woods of Werowocomoco. More awful still was the instant response it got, for from all about us there swept up an answering shout, the twang of bow-strings, and the whizzing of arrows.

My comrades, as if obeying one common impulse, had come together like frightened sheep; which way to turn they knew not. The savages, stripped to a breech-cloth and hideous with paint, were swarming in from all sides to cut us off from the boats. That Powhatan would fail in his design to destroy us to the last man seemed little likely. A few had already fallen, shot to death with arrows, and now as the savages came against us armed with clubs and their knives or axes of English make, our empty-handed group rent itself asunder. We had gone back in a twinkling to the most primitive instinct; it was each man for himself, fear in the heart of each crowding out all tenderness for his fellows.

I had no wish to die in my tracks like a stalled ox, or indeed to die at all, and it stood me in good stead that I had seen and heard enough of the Indians not to be disconcerted by their war paint or their yells. If I could but dodge their clubs and knives, it mattered not to me the noise they made. My first impulse was to run back toward the boats, but a glance showed me that already the greater number of my comrades were fleeing in that direction, and so hideous a massacre was in progress that my heart

seemed to die within me. Here and there some stout fellow of a good courage put up empty hands to grapple with his enemy, but he would be thrust at from every side, for where there was one Englishman there were I know not how many savages thirsting for his blood. There were others who would fain have trusted to their heels to save their heads, and these as they ran became the quarry for yelling packs of Indians; others again seemingly numb with terror stood to have their brains dashed out, offering neither resistance nor attempting flight. Here I caught sight of some fear-stricken face, or it was a look of horror and anguish in the eyes of him who had been brought to bay and but waited the knife thrust. The memory of these things has never passed from me, though I saw them as uncertainly as if by flashes of light.

I had been a little in advance of my comrades when Rawhunt gave the signal to his waiting bands, and apparently had not been greatly regarded in their first onslaught; but now as I stood undecided as to the direction in which an opening lay for the flight I purposed, an arrow buried itself in the ground at my feet, and a second later another went through the sleeve of my doublet. I deemed that since life was worth some effort even in that desperate pass, now had come the moment for that effort and instinctively I tightened my belt.

Toward the river, as I had seen, lay immediate and certain death, and I turned inland; in that direction would I go. With a mighty intake of my breath and a little prayer that God would not utterly abandon one Richard Faraday, I sprang forward, but had only made half a dozen strides when I became aware that I was singled out for pursuit. Advancing toward me was a lusty painted fellow, who, as he approached, menaced me with his keen axe.

I stole a glance to the right and to the left, and saw that other painted forms were coming at me from all sides. I quickly made my choice of evils, keeping straight on, since I reasoned that one heathen might be better managed than half a hundred. When I was within perhaps a score of paces of the savage, he came to a stand, and I saw him poise his axe aloft; then as he let fly at me, I ducked very low, making sure he intended to cleave my skull, and the axe whistled past me. Another instant and I was close on him who had meant so unkindly by me, and before he knew my purpose I had planted my fist on the point of his jaw with such good will that he was made to groan like a poled ox, nor could he keep his feet, but down he went in a heap; whereat I let forth a shout of triumph as I sprang lightly over his prostrate body.

There ensued as cruel a race as was ever run by a man. With that yelping pack at my heels and on my flanks, it was dodge and double, now to the right and now to the left; hands were thrust out to seize me, and my clothes were half torn from my shoulders; blows were aimed at me with heavy clubs, which did more to urge me on than to stop me.

I had put perhaps a mile betwixt myself and that spot where the massacre of my comrades was taking place, when I came into a space almost denuded of trees, such as were standing having been killed by building fires at their base. On the further side of this dead forest was an open field, and beyond it I saw the huts of Werowocomoco.

I made no doubt my race was run and lost, for my pursuers held me to a straight course, and so perforce Werowocomoco became my goal. Yet I relaxed not an inch of my lead, though I felt my case was desperate and my mind went far enough afield with thoughts of those I was like never to see again in this world.

Now I was running amongst the scattered huts, when a grim figure darted athwart my path; I heard a club whistle above my head, and then in a twinkling earth and sky seemed to come together at my very feet; and the huddle of huts amongst which I fled, the winter sunlight, the yells of the savage pack at my heels—all was snuffed out.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

WHEN my senses returned I found myself lying at full length on a bed of skins; at my feet a smouldering fire gave out the pungent odour of cedar wood in combustion, and a scanty light to some dark interior, from all of which I judged I must be in an Indian lodge. I sought to lift myself by my elbows, but the effort made me know that my head was very dizzy, and I sank back groaning. There was a slight movement at the other side of the handful of wasting embers and someone spoke my name.

"I doubted if you would ever come back to life, Master Farraday, you lay so long as one dead," the voice said.

"I have a serviceable thick skull," I rejoined. "But who are you?"

"I am young Henry Spilman."

He stepped to my side as he spoke, and I could make out his slight boyish figure in the uncertain light. He had come to Virginia to be a sort of page to Captain Ratcliffe.

"Were any others saved?" I asked.

He shook his head.

"Lord, sir, all but us are dead to the last gasp and the last man," and a shudder passed through him.

"And where are we?" I asked, after a moment's silence.

"At Werowocomoco, Master Farraday."

"And how is it we two were not slain with the others?"

"I do not know how you come here, but the comeliest Indian maid I have yet seen had them spare my life," he said.

"Pocahontas!" I cried.

"They were about to make an end of me with their clubs, when the maid interfered. By her orders I was brought hither, to find you, Master Farraday, stretched out like one dead."

"You may thank God that He has given the blessed Pocahontas so tender a heart," I said, and my courage began to return.

True we were prisoners, but clearly we had a friend whose power had been sufficient to save us from immediate death.

"Do you think they but spare us now, to fat and eat us later?" asked young Henry.

"I would not burden myself with that worry, lad," I said. "I am mainly concerned with living, and if they kill me they can make what devil's use they please of me."

Now the flaps of skin that answered for a door to the lodge were pushed aside. Through this low opening there came the pale radiance of a moon-lit winter's night and I saw that the earth lay wrapped in a soft covering of newly fallen snow. A figure appeared in the opening, and then the curtains dropped into their place. With my foot I reached out and pushed the smouldering embers of the fire together and a ruddy flame burst forth to show us the intruder. It was Pocahontas herself, in her robe of doe-skin; and I vow no man ever looked on a royal mistress with more of honest love and gratitude than I did on that little princess, whom I doubted not had made herself the merciful instrument to save my life.

She had not been nigh James Town since John Smith left us, so that I had not seen her in some months; but that she had not forgotten me I had good evidence, for she spoke my name with a certain quaint mistrust of the unaccustomed English, yet quite distinct for all that.

"Farraday?"

I answered her in her own tongue, which I spoke as well as any man of James Town, for I was aware that her knowledge of English went not beyond the few words John Smith had taught her. I expressed my gratitude as handsomely as I could that she should have been moved to save my life. To this she listened very patiently, for my skill with Indian words was so much less than my emotions just then. When I had done, she asked me if Captain Smith was gone from James Town as she had been told; and when I made answer I fancied I saw by the red glow of the fire which was between us a look of settled melancholy come to the eager face that was bent upon me. I wondered if this little wild princess had not a tenderness for the young soldier.

"And whither has he gone, Farraday?" she asked, after a little pause.

"To his own people."

"Across the Great Water?"

"Yes."

Then she would know how sore hurt he was when he sailed; and I explained to her as nearly as I could his condition.

"And when his wounds heal, will he come back?"

"I doubt not he will," I said.

"And he will be very angry with Powhatan?" she questioned me anxiously.

"How many suffered death?" I asked.

"All but you and the boy, and one man who escaped to the boats."

I shuddered, and yet our fortunes had been such that I was well accustomed to death in its various forms.

"And what will become of young Henry here, and me?" I asked. "Will Pocahontas desire that we should live?"

"You are Captain Smith's friend, Farraday," she said, and she rested her small brown hand on my arm.

"Yes," I answered.

"You shall live to tell him that Pocahontas was ever a friend to the English."

"And the boy?"

"He shall live, too," said the child.

Before she left, Pocahontas gave me to understand that we would not be permitted to return to James Town at once, but we were to have no fear. This was not what I had counted on, yet it was so much better than having my brains beat out that I determined to make the best of my captivity.

Yet it irked me much to daily see the scalps of my comrades which hung suspended from a long pole that was fixed between two trees which grew before the royal lodge. Here, too, I would see the grim old Emperor wrapped in his scarlet robe, striding back and forth, his savage heart no doubt elate at the victory his craft had given him over thirty Englishmen, and probably plotting wider massacres, with more scalps to hang along the path where he took the air. This sight served me as a grim reminder of his ferocity and I took good pains never to offend him.

We had been at Werowocomoco some four weeks when we learned from Pocahontas that the Emperor was making ready to go to Orapax at the headwaters of the Chickahominy River, and that it was his purpose to take us thither with him. Now I had been from the first as well watched as I was cared for, and to attempt to escape was to hazard much, for if I failed, my scalp would quickly go up alongside those of my comrades, a possibility I viewed with little relish. Moreover, I trusted that my tractableness would in

the end moved Powhatan to send me back to James Town of his own accord.

When we left Werowocomoco the savage court journeyed first to Machot, at the head of the York, where we tarried a little time to refresh ourselves; then we ascended the Pamunkey, on whose banks we finally left our canoes, and crossed through the woods to Orapax. At Orapax Powhatan would have me manage the building of a house for him like those at James Town; especially he desired a chimney to it, of the convenience and comfort of which he had heard much. And so against my inclination I found myself playing architect to this old man. I was furnished with an abundance of labour, such as it was, and for tools I had the axes and saws his tribe had stolen from us, or else had gotten in trade from members of the colony in time of famine.

On occasion as the weeks slipped by the Indians were able to tell me something of what was going forward at James Town. That there was much sickness and many deaths there, and that the different captains were continually seeking abroad for trade. One of the ships they reported to have gone across the Great Water. I doubted this, but in the end found the cunning savages were right, Captain West having sailed for England shortly after the massacre of Ratcliffe and his party.

At last I finished with the new royal residence at Orapax, in which Powhatan immediately set up his bedstead, and he was more handsomely sheltered than any other heathen potentate in that part of the world, though the famous English chimney did send most of its smoke into his chamber, I having proved myself only an indifferent mechanic in its fashioning.

This work which I managed for Powhatan took me up to


the end of April, by which time the craving to return to James Town was well-nigh intolerable with me, for as I knew the arrival of the London Company's ships could now be looked for any day. I was on the point of quitting Orapax without the formality of a leave taking, when Powhatan himself signified that I was to go back to the York with a party of sturgeon fishers he was about to despatch thither.

When the time of my going arrived, I went without young Henry Spilman, for the Emperor had taken a liking to the boy, who, having neither friends nor kindred at James Town, had decided to remain with the savages for a time longer.

I returned to Werowocomoco by way of Machot and the York, to arrive there after nightfall on the fourth day, so that I was forced to abide until the morrow; but at dawn I was put over the river to the south shore, and set off with all speed to cross the narrow neck of land that lies betwixt the James and York.

I wondered mightily as I strode forward how my comrades had fared during the winter, and if Percy had put whoever could be made to work at planting corn, for the time was at hand when our fields should be looked to.

I came within sight of the glasshouse and quickened my pace, thinking I might find some of the Dutchmen and Poles at work there; but as I drew nearer I observed the place had an utterly abandoned air, and that the path which led away through the woods to James Town was choked with a fresh vegetation, by which I knew there could have been but little passing that way in the last month at least. I entered and had advanced only a little distance along this path when I caught sight of a solitary figure amongst the trees. This brought me to an instant stand, for I was unable to determine on the moment whether it



was one of our colonists or some skulking Indian, whom it would have been an ill thing for me to meet unarmed; but I was at once reassured, a second glance told me that it was clearly an Englishman.

He came toward me with his head bent forward as if closely scanning the ground, now and then pausing to scratch amongst the dead leaves with a stick he carried. When he had approached to within some fifty paces of me I set up an hullo, which caused him to come erect, and with never a glance in my direction he shuffled off into the woods at what was meant to be a run, but was no more than a slow and painful limp. I called again, this time bidding him stop, and he paused uncertainly.

I made certain that a more wretched creature I had never looked on than this pitiful object who was ready to flee at the very sound of a human voice. He was naught but yellow parchment skin and bones, with wild, deep-sunk eyes that sent forth an unearthly light; beard and hair had not known the barber's shears in months, and his clothes hung about him in tatters. In one hand he carried the stick with which he had been scratching amongst the dead leaves, and in the other was clutched a miserable handful of sassafras and tockwogh roots.

"God love you, sir," he cried in querulous voice. "And who are you?"

And then as he spoke I made shift to recognise him—it was Richard Belfield, the London Company's perfumer; not the dapper fellow I had known, but the foul creature of sickness and famine, with a wolfish stare, and hunger writ large and terrible on every shrunken feature.

"Do you not know me, Master Belfield?" I asked, for he was all of a tremble.

"Know you—know you—sir, you have a well-fed look, whither do you come?"

"From living with the Indians."

He limped away from me a step or two, his eyes wide with terror; but I quickly gained a place at his side.

"Why do you run? There are no savages here," I said.

"I was so beaten up with clubs a fortnight past by the naked devils that I can scarce manage to shuffle," he made answer. "For days I lay on my bed in James Town with no one coming near, starving by inches, sir—starving, and no one heeding my plight."

Such was his utter weakness that the mere memory of what he had suffered caused the big tears to well from his burning eyes and fall on his unkempt beard.

"I am Richard Farraday; have you forgotten me, Master Belfield?" I asked.

He gave me an uncertain glance, infinitely more expressive of terror than recognition.

"Trouble me no more," he quavered. "I knew Master Farraday well, but the savages beat out his brains along with the brains of some thirty others of our company."

Clearly the man was crazed by the suffering he had endured.

"Do you think the dead walk these woods?" I asked.

"Who can doubt it—God, what have I not seen here with my own eyes!" he cried.

I took him by the arm, and this human contact seemed to reassure him.

"Is my touch different from that of a living man?" I asked.

"Alive—and well—Master Farraday, and having the look of a full-fed man." He smacked his lips with a wolfish relish at the very thought.

Then I remembered that I had in my pocket a piece of dried venison which I had brought from Werowocomoco. This I drew forth and handed him, and he pounced upon it

as ravenously as a starving cur would have done, and with as little that was human in his manner of doing it. I could see, too, by the furtive glance he fixed upon me that he feared I might repent of my charity. Presently when the last morsel of my dried venison had disappeared, I said:

"And now what of the company at James Town?"

"Lord—Lord!" he cried. "Such times as there have been for us all!"

"Do they hunger?" I asked; but there was no need to ask.

He put a dirty hand on my arm.

"Most are gone where they will never hunger more. You left us some four hundred strong—how many do you think remain?"

"A half," I said, at a hazard.

He laughed harshly.

"Not a hundred. As I am a truthful man, Master Farraday, scarce sixty remain alive to curse the day they first saw this land."

I fell back as one who had received a blow.

"But sixty living!" I managed to gasp out.

"Some the savages killed, but by far the greater number starved!"

"Does Lieutenant Percy still live?"

"Yes, Master Farraday, but prostrate with sickness."

"We will go forward," I said.

Belfield sought to keep his place at my side.

"Not so fast, Master Farraday," he entreated, and I somewhat accommodated my pace to his. "After Captain Smith left us, the strong would no longer gather for the weak," he said.

"Why was there not trade with the savages?" I asked.

"We sought trade, but for the most part we got naught but mortal wounds with clubs and arrows."

"But the hogs at the island—and the sheep and goats?" I demanded.

"Our officers and the savages made spoil of them——"

"And you?"

"Some small portion we tasted, but our captains and their bullies were so much stronger than we common men, we durst not, through very fear for our lives, oppose them; so we got only scraps of hide and what our masters were too dainty to make use of."

Had I not known conditions almost as monstrous as he described that first summer at James Town, I would have credited no part of what he told me.

"Betimes the Indians would bring us a little grain to barter; and what bargains the cunning knaves drove. I have seen a man give back and breast plate, sword and musket, for not so much corn as he might easily hold in his two hands. But for the most part we subsisted on acorns, roots, and walnuts; nor durst we venture far from James Town to fish or gather oysters. The pagans were ever on the watch to slay us with the very weapons we had sold them."

"It is too vile to say!" I cried.

But he babbled on as he limped and shuffled at my side.

"There is worse still to tell of this starving time, Master Farraday—and the end is not yet."

"Worse—my God!"

"So great was the famine that a savage that had been killed and buried in the woods, the poorer sort dug up——" He extended a shaking hand and plucked at my sleeve. "Lean nearer, Master Farraday," he said, in a hoarse whisper. "As God lives, they dug up the pagan, as I say, and did eat of him."

And now I felt he was stark mad, that his sufferings had of a certainty unseated his reason.

"Nor is that all—I can even tell you worse, Master Farraday, and you will listen to me. There was one John Laydon, who married Ann, that was maid to Mistress Forrest?"

"What of him?"

"He did kill his wife, and had eaten part of her before it was known—there are some who hold that his eating of her was only a trick to make us believe starvation had sent him mad; these maintain that he really killed the poor wench in a jealous rage." He glanced up into my face with burning eyes. "You are horror-struck at such villainy? Well, it earned him a worthy punishment, for we burnt him alive, as he well merited. But such a dish as he did eat, I never heard of."

"No more of this!" I cried, at last finding my tongue.

"Do I offend you, sir?" he asked, and again he rested his hand on the sleeve of my doublet.

But I drew away, for I saw in those brown skeleton fingers a likeness to a vulture's talons.

We had emerged from the woods, and I observed that our cornfields were unplanted, and that the blockhouse we had so lately built to guard the approach from the mainland had been torn down. I turned to my companion.

"To make our winter fires. As death emptied the houses, we pulled them to pieces log by log," said he.

Then I saw that the gates stood open and unwatched. But what use to guard them, when half the palisades had gone with the houses to kindle fires for that famine-stricken band. As if he sensed the thought that was uppermost in my mind, Belfield said:

"Would you have had us freeze as well as starve? I tell you there were none with strength to bring wood from the forest."

We entered James Town while he was still speaking, and

such a James Town! With half its houses gone, its streets rank with a foul vegetation; while here and there amidst the desolation I saw moving about the spectral figure of some man or woman or child. But my sudden appearance earned me nothing beyond an occasional glance of dull wonder.

I halted in amazement. By far the greater part of all the suffering James Town had known lacked excuse; and my heart went hot for those who had cut such a sorry figure at their empire building. All that had been needed was John Smith's equal in courage and determination, and because there had been lacking such leadership as his four hundred of my own race and kind had perished there in the short space of seven months.

As I stood gazing out over the ruin folly and cowardice had so soon made, a shrill cry came floating up from the shore.

"A sail! A sail!"

At this cry James Town threw off its dull stupor bred of hunger and despair, the houses gave up the scanty population, and a babel of voices arose; and then again came the cry:

"A sail! A sail!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

BEFORE I was aware I had lost him, Belfield joined with those who were rushing toward the river, and following in his steps I presently found myself in the thick of the eager throng that lined the shore. A glance told me that succour had indeed come to us; for drifting with the tide I saw two ships, and small as they were they came freighted with such high hope of mercy, with such visions of plenty for those gaunt men and weary women, that the shrill voices became silent and a great calm fell on the shore; the mothers clasped their children in their arms, whispering their thankfulness to God that He had not utterly abandoned us, while the tears rolled down their wasted cheeks; and many a bearded fellow held a shaking hand before his face to hide its workings; for truly all the navies of the world could not have moved us as did the sight of those small vessels, each with its fluttering flag to proclaim the land whence it came.

I heard someone speak my name in utter astonishment, and I turned to find that I was standing beside Lieutenant Percy; yet sickness and hunger had dealt so cruelly by this honest gentleman that I scarcely recognised him.

"Whence have you sprung, man?" he asked in wonderment, and he gripped my hands.

"From Orapax," I made answer.

As I spoke I heard a heavy plunge as the foremost ship cast anchor, and a wild cheer broke from that haggard group lining the shore. Percy placed his hand upon my shoulder as if to support himself.

"Saved! Saved!" he muttered under his breath.

"What ships are these?" I asked.

"God knows—'tis enough they come in season. I tell you, a little later James Town would have been naught but an unsealed grave."

"Yet this cannot be Lord De la Warr," I said.

Percy did not answer. He was leaning heavily on my shoulder, and I verily believe he must have fallen, such was his weakness, but for the support I gave him.

We had reckoned on the ships being from England, but most wonderful to say there came ashore in the first boat that put off, Sir Thomas Gates, Lord De la Warr's lieutenant; Sir George Somers, Admiral of Virginia; and Captain Newport, Vice Admiral. These three had long since been given up for lost. The Admiral sprang lightly ashore the instant the boat's keel grated on the sandy bottom; he was quickly followed by Sir Thomas Gates, a handsome, kindly seeming man, but without the old sea dog's look of hardihood and high resolution. Newport was the last to set foot on land.

The three halted in astonishment at sight of the little group that had assembled to greet them, and I saw the Admiral's ruddy cheeks turn white as his eyes went from haggard face to haggard face. Still leaning on my shoulder for support, Percy took a forward step.

"Welcome, Sir George," he said.

For a long moment Somers regarded Percy from under his shaggy brows with much of doubt and uncertainty in his glance, then the light of recognition came into his eyes.

"Percy, is it indeed you?" he cried.

"You come none too soon, for we have about reached the end," said Percy sadly.

The Admiral tugged at his grizzled beard, but I could see that he did not even yet comprehend the situation.

"But is this all—did not last year's fleet arrive—seven ships with some three hundred colonists?"

"Yes, they came safely into the river," said Percy.

"And where are they settled?" demanded the Admiral, with an instant look of relief.

"All but this poor handful, and a half score perhaps, who are too sick to quit their beds, are dead, Sir George."

The Admiral, old lion that he was, fell back a step in horror.

"Some plague has swept them away," he faltered.

"That plague was hunger," said Percy.

And then for the first time Somers understood the black despair that had rested on that doomed shore. He turned to the little group that was pressing close about him.

"May God have mercy on you, poor people!" he cried.

"They need hunger no longer," said Sir Thomas Gates, speaking now for the first time.

"Truly if it were the last ship's biscuit, the last measure of wine, they should have it," said the Admiral. He turned again to those who surrounded him. "Sir Thomas Gates will do what may be done to relieve you," he said.

Words that sounded most merciful to those hungry wretches who had been put to such vile shifts to live. The Admiral moved toward the nearest gap in the palisades, his broad brows overcast with gloom and his eyes infinitely sad.

"Help me, Farraday, with your arm," said Percy.

And we three, the stout grizzled sailor a step in advance, and the emaciated soldier leaning on my shoulder, entered James Town, which in its desolation spoke so truly of failure and that evil fortune that had been its portion.

Midway of our little capital, looking from east to west, the Admiral paused. He turned to Percy.

"We are bearers of a new commission. Who is president?" he said.

"I would fain it had been otherwise, but when John Smith sailed for England last September the Council elected me to serve in his stead."

"So Captain Smith has gone over seas—and where is Ratcliffe?"

"The savages trapped him with some thirty of his men, and made an end of them," said Percy.

"And Archer?"

"Dead."

"And Frances West?"

"Sailed in mid-winter for England."

"What of Matthew Scrivener?"

"Drowned."

"And Anthony Gosnold?"

"He, too, was drowned."

"Captain Waldo?"

"Drowned," said Percy laconically.

"Death has not been idle here," said the Admiral, with a deep breath.

Then presently he began to tell of the loss of his ship, the *Sea Venture*; how she had been caught in the tail of a hurricane and driven far out of her course, to speedily become little more than an unmanageable wreck that was kept afloat only by dint of unceasing work at the pumps.

"At last one black night as I stood by the helmsman, I resolved we must commit ourselves to the mercy of the sea, or rather to the mercy of Almighty God, whose mercy far exceeds all His works. Then, sirs, just as I thought the time had come to take to the small boats, I saw by the blinding flashes of light, land ahead, with its long line of breakers; and though it was beyond belief that the ship would live to pass that line, yet God sent a great sea which carried us forward and lodged us firmly betwixt two rocky ledges. There we remained fixed as if held in a vise, and

when day came I landed all my people, one hundred and fifty men, women, and children, without further mishap than a little wetting."

"And what land was this?" It was Percy who spoke.

"The Isles of Devils, as the English mariners call them; or the Bermudas, as the Spaniards have named them. They lay two hundred leagues off the mainland."

"Those same Isles of Devils have an evil fame," said Percy.

"We found it a right pleasant spot. There was an abundance of wild fowl, fish, and turtle, and wild hogs, so that we never hungered from that day to this. Knowing that the colony here was furnished with three small ships, I had my carpenters deck over the long boat, and nine men set forth in her to acquaint you with our plight. I doubt not the attempt cost them their lives, since they were never heard from."

"You fared so much better on your islands than we here at James Town, it was perhaps well that nine men should perish rather than ten times that number," said Percy.

"Perhaps it is as you say, Percy," muttered the Admiral, and he turned a step away with a look on his face I did not understand. Afterward I knew he was thinking of his poor lady, who had died whilst they waited news of those nine men in the long boat. Sir George resumed: "In the end we built yonder two small ships of the wreckage of the *Sea Venture* and the cedar wood our island furnished, fitly naming them the *Patience* and *Deliverance*."

Later in the day I had my year-old letters, but so illegible from the soaking they had got when the *Sea Venture* was wrecked that I could not decipher one word in fifty of what had been written, so that they told me absolutely nothing of those matters I most wished to have news of.

As the two ships brought supplies not sufficient to last

us above a fortnight, a company furnished with nets was sent down river to catch and salt sturgeon, but no attempt was made to plant our fields or gardens, and the rumour gained currency that Virginia was to be abandoned; for with the *Patience* and *Deliverance*, and our two pinnaces, it was possible to transport the remnant of our company back to England; and presently Percy told me that the intention was to coast north to the English fishing stations at Newfoundland, where we might reasonably hope to replenish our stores.

Yet now, wonderfully enough, there were those who were mightily cast down by this decision of our leaders. It smacked too much of a backward step, and some of us who were seasoned settlers of three years' standing were sure that John Smith would have managed better. Some even who had been his greatest maligners while he was with us, and stiff-necked to combat his authority, now boasted that while he could stand or go so little a thing as furnishing us with victual would never have sent him out of Virginia.

But for all the grumbling, and it comported not with our dignity to fall too readily into line with the new order, I think there was no man of us who failed to understand that the situation demanded some prompt action, especially when Sir Thomas Gates had us come together before him, and made a speech telling us how our stores had dwindled until there was not enough to last fourteen days longer, and that while it was true Lord De la Warr had doubtless sailed from England with an abundance of all things needful for the colony, and extraordinary powers for the maintaining of order and discipline, yet the hazard of that long voyage was so great he might as well be five months as two on the way out—and what then?

Truly he had given us something to think on, and we

began to fit the pinnaces for sea, and with this open declaration of defeat the preparations for sailing went forward apace. I was sent for young Henry Spilman, who was now at Werowocomoco, and while I was absent on this mission our ordnance was dismounted, and together with the small arms and shot, buried beside the water-gate; then the four crews were made up, a company of soldiers and settlers allotted to each ship of the little fleet, and on a fair June morning we marched out of James Town for the last time, as we never doubted.

As the first boats were getting clear of the shore black clouds of smoke rolled up from one of the cabins which had been set fire to, and our wooden town seemed menaced with utter destruction, since the officers appeared not to regard this act of an incendiary. But Sir Thomas Gates ordered me to take a file of men and extinguish the flames; while I was busy carrying out this order, he posted armed guards at the water-gate and the breached palisades, which were not withdrawn until the last settler was aboard ship. Then a volley of small shot was fired, the soldiers came off from the land, anchors were lifted, and our voyage begun. And in token of all we had endured, there was left only those few dismantled cabins and the graves of some four hundred English.

We made no great run that day, the wind held contrary for the most part, and at nightfall we were forced to anchor in midstream. Morning came to find us still struggling with adverse winds, yet hour by hour, with our flagship holding the lead, we crept down toward the river's mouth, and looking eastward, my thoughts went beyond the entrance to the great bay, beyond the long days while we sailed north to find the fishing settlements, beyond the ocean's rough buffeting, to the shores of England, and Dane's Hill, and all that was most dear. And whilst I

dreamed of my welcome, there was growing up out of the distance what at first might have been taken for a bit of driftwood; and a little later for the canoe of some Indian. Then we made out that it was the longboat of our sturgeon fishers from below.

She lay alongside the flagship, and we saw her people go over the side. Not five minutes elapsed when the flagship hoisted signals to the rest of the fleet to follow, and at the same moment came round before the freshening wind, and her dripping bows pointed up stream. As she passed near us on her altered course I caught sight of the Admiral, who was one of a little group standing on the quarter-deck. I saw him place his trumpet to his lips.

“Despatches—Lord De la Warr is below!”

Here the wind blew a sudden gust, and what else he said was lost.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

TWILIGHT had fallen on land and water when our pinnace dropped anchor off James Town. Word was passed us from Admiral Somers' cedar ship, which lay close alongside, that we old settlers and soldiers were to go ashore and resume our former quarters in the deserted town.

There was naught but the booming of frogs to welcome us as we pulled away to the land. But as I stepped ashore a tall fellow who had just quitted one of the other boats came to my side and touched me on the shoulder. I turned and found myself face to face with Marshall.

"Praise God, lad, you still live!" he said with great heartiness, and his hand closed about mine.

Now, I had never paused to consider that he might by any chance have sailed with Lord De la Warr's expedition, so that his appearance on that lonely shore left me speechless.

"You, Master Marshall!" I at last managed to gasp.

"And why not? Did I not say I should return—that I were better off here?"

He paused abruptly to regard me, as I thought, curiously.

"Did you not get the letters despatched by the *Sea Venture*?" he demanded.

"Aye, but so soaked with salt water as to be illegible," I said.

"Then you do not know——"

"Know what?" I broke in eagerly.

I feared I knew not what.

"That all is well at Dane's Hill," he said, after an instant's pause.

"Thank God for that!" I cried. "But this seems a miracle—your being here!"

"I came up from below in the longboat. Lord De la Warr's three ships lie off Point Comfort; at the lower settlement we learned that Virginia was to be abandoned."

"And what is the intention now?" I asked.

"We bring a chosen company, and provisions to last above a year."

He had taken me by the arm, and now we directed our steps toward what had been my quarters those last days I spent at James Town. The rough Virginia-made furnishings of the place were undisturbed, and when I had tossed my roll of blankets on the rude bed and rested my musket on its accustomed pegs above the fireplace, I could count myself settled.

Yet I was bitterly cast down at the sudden ending of our voyage, for while it was true that Lord De la Warr came vested with quite extraordinary powers, and could, if he were disposed, sanction my immediate return to England, he could as easily hold me a time longer in Virginia. And this was what I feared; for while my merits were not conspicuous, they were at least solid. I was seasoned to the climate; I spoke the dialects of the various tribes with some little readiness; I knew also where were located all the chief towns of the savages, and how they were best come at either by land or water. There were not many left alive who could boast such an acquaintance with that country and its people, and I greatly feared that Lord De la Warr would be loath to let such ripe knowledge escape him.

While this was passing through my mind, we had seated

ourselves before the open door of my cabin. Then Marshall in a low voice began to tell me of his return to England. How, after a brief and unsuccessful quest in London, he had set out for Westmoreland. So far he had got with his relation when he paused.

The full moon had risen since we came ashore, and the soft light gave its own beauty to James Town's grass-grown streets and shabby, dismantled cabins. Who could not forget on such a night that the spectre of sickness and famine had ever walked abroad to claim its hundreds there, who wished to recall the morning rounds of the watch, or those shallow graves that were such a labour for starving men to dig!

"Was there ever a fairer night, or a softer air!" said Marshall, turning dark, eager eyes on me.

"You do not tell me of Mary," I said.

"How could I hope to do the maid justice, Dick?" he said tenderly.

"She is not changed?" I asked.

"If you mean by that, does she still love one Richard Farraday, I can bid you be content; for the rest, she is most radiant to look upon. That I came so fresh from seeing you earned me such a welcome as I had not expected." He was silent for a moment. "You cannot know what purpose this has given me—I, who counted my life as ended! Yet, tell me, Farraday," and he rested a hand on my shoulder, "what think you of Virginia as a place of permanent habitation? Could you find content here?"

I glanced at him in no little wonder, and he continued:

"Your friend Captain Smith has not been idle. He swears the London Company shall make you a grant of land, as they may under their new charter."

"For what reason?" I asked in amazement.

"In consideration of your services to the colony. Flat

on his back, John o' James Town is a more active friend than most men would be standing on two legs."

It seemed to me that Marshall avoided telling me of those I had the deepest interest in; but I asked:

"Then you have seen him, and he has not recovered from the effect of his wounds?"

"His condition was pitiful enough, as I can testify, when he first arrived in London; but when I saw him last, just before we sailed, he was near healed of his wounds and was busy at work on his map of Virginia, and with petitions to the London Company to reward fittingly his old soldiers, of whom there are so few left the Company can well enough afford to be generous."

Now, next to hearing of the household at Dane's Hill, nothing could have pleased me as did this word of John Smith.

"You came in the same ship with Lord De la Warr?" I said.

"Yes, and he knows of your case, Farraday. I doubt not, if you wish it, you can go back when the ships sail."

"Wish it?" I cried. I marvelled that he could even question what my desire would be, for had he not seen Mary?

"Believe me, Dick, there is no country to compare with this; and who that has known it would leave it for a crowded land?"

"It is not the land I want—you forget Mary," I said.

"True—I forgot," he muttered absently, and was silent a moment, then he burst out: "A half dozen stout fellows with a taste for such a life, and furnished with plenty of weapons and their cabins strongly palisaded, might fare well on this river."

"If one had the choosing of the half dozen," I muttered, for I did not wish to seem discourteous, and yet I

could think of nothing but that Lord De la Warr knew of my case, and might be willing to right the wrong that had been done me, so far as it could be righted.

"Truly one would need to be sure of his comrades, but there will be no dearth of men to pick and choose from; for, as sure as the moon has risen this night, Virginia will never be abandoned by men of English birth. They have come to claim it, and here will they abide to found them a new nation."

But I cared very little then as to what the future of Virginia would be, my own concerns absorbing all my thoughts. Marshall continued:

"Had there been time to get them when Lord De la Warr despatched the longboat with orders to turn the fleet back, I should have brought your budget of letters."

Then he told me at considerable length of my father and mother and Mary, and of Tom and Betty. This narration carried me back to Dane's Hill, with its interests which had been so vital to me, and to which I had seemed so necessary. At last Marshall rose from his seat, and I glanced about me to get a sudden sense of the lateness of the hour. No lights shone now in any of the houses, nor did the murmur of distant voices come up on the wind that blew from off the river; save for the familiar night sounds, all was sunk in silence and repose.

"We would better sleep," said Marshall.

Yet, after I had stretched myself out on my bed, I lay for a long time staring through the open door up into the night. If I could compass it, I would return to England with the first of the ships to sail, but I felt an infinite pity for Marshall. It was true he had found his daughter, but his luckless plotting was bearing evil fruit for him, since he durst not return to England, save at the peril of his very neck.

I fell asleep thinking of this, and it was broad day when I was awakened by the roar of distant guns, which told me Lord De la Warr was close at hand. Dressing, I hurried forth to be met by Marshall.

"The ships are near by, Farraday, and I have found where we may breakfast," he said.

In the clear light of day I saw how great the change that had come to him; his eyes had quite lost their old wild look, he seemed less the shabby adventurer ripe for any desperate project, and more the gentleman he was by birth and breeding.

We had snatched a few hasty mouthfuls when the drums beat the call to quarters, and we took up our station under arms beside the water-gate, through which the Captain-General would enter James Town. We had not long to wait, for presently the three great ships under shortened sail crept into view. The moment they cast anchor a number of boats were seen to put away from their sides, while drums rolled and cannon roared a noisy salute; and though our culverins were silent, being still buried under ground, our little fleet did its part gallantly. With all our military state, which had a grim use beyond the mere firing of blank charges, there had been nothing to so warm the blood as the welcome Lord De la Warr was given that Sunday morning in June.

When he stepped ashore we saw a man of martial bearing, who looked well fitted by temper and experience to assume the heavy burden that would henceforth be his. He came with no little pomp and dignity, surrounded by his Privy Council, his Admirals, and his Master of the Horse, and attended by a guard of fifty halberd-bearers in scarlet cloaks and silver trappings. It quickened the pulse to see such a goodly company on that remote shore, where the

grim and all-conquering captain, Death, had fought us with hunger and fever.

With his gallant retinue about him, Lord De la Warr moved up from the water's edge a pace or two, and then he did that in which I saw more hope than in all the worldly state he had brought into the wilderness; he dropped to his knees, and as we knelt about him, rendered thanks to God, who had given him the means to save Virginia.

CHAPTER THIRTY

PASSING between the files of armed men who were drawn up beside the water-gate to receive him, Lord De la Warr entered our ruined town as the bells that hung in the gable of our log church sent forth a sturdy peal; and I know he must needs have taken pleasure in the fact that he had come to reside amongst Christian men who put the worship of God before all their other concerns.

With his little group of notables, and his halberd-bearers in their scarlet cloaks, and many old soldiers and settlers following, our Captain-General entered the little church we had built for godly Master Hunt, whose devotion to our colony had cost him his life. In his stead to preach to us now we had Master Bucke, who had come out with Admiral Somers. I would have gone forward with the others to hear Mr. Bucke's sermon, but Marshall took me by the arm.

"Come with me, Farraday," he said, turning toward the river. "Are you not eager for those letters of yours?"

For the moment they had quite gone out of my mind, yet I was in a mighty excited state as we put off in one of the small skiffs we found drawn up on the shore near the water-gate; and five minutes later, when I clambered aboard Lord De la Warr's flagship, my heart was beating high in anticipation of what was in store for me when I should have stolen off by myself with my budget.

The great ship seemed all but deserted, if one excepted a group of men and women standing by the bulwark for-

ward; and as I glanced in the direction of these, to my amazement I saw advancing from amongst them no less a personage than Jarvis, the coachman. He came briskly toward me, a broad grin twisting his sour old face into an expression that was almost genial.

"Give you good-day, Master Farraday," he said.

I was so little prepared for the sight of Jarvis that I could only stare in speechless silence at him. Then as I took him by the hand:

"Her young ladyship——" he began.

But Marshall cut him short.

"'Bide here, my man, a moment," he said, and hurried me toward the after part of the ship.

I glanced back over my shoulder and saw that Jarvis was following us with his eyes, and was still grinning with as much good-will as his hard old face could be made to express.

We entered the ship's great cabin, which was empty and well-nigh stripped of sea chests and the like, these having already been taken to the deck to be sent ashore. Marshall cast his eyes about the place, and crossed to a door on the side which gave entrance to an inner cabin, the great cabin having the length but not the breadth of the deck above, there being allotted a space on either hand for a tier of small cabins resting against the ship's side. He thrust open the door.

"Here is your Virginia savage!" he said.

And before I could ask what he meant, he stepped past me, and I had the great cabin to myself, but only for an instant.

I was still staring in the direction he had gone when I caught the sound of my own name spoken very soft, which caused me to turn quickly; and there, standing in the open doorway of the small cabin, I beheld Mary.

My first thought was that my eyes were playing me some trick, since what they told me was so far beyond all possibility of belief. But while I was staring with all my might, she put out her hands toward me with such a soft little cry of pure joy as is not given to every man to hear, and all my doubt left me in a twinkling. It was Mary! Her lips were parted in a doubting, wistful smile, and the rich colour was coming and going on her cheeks, as if she were not quite certain of what her welcome would be.

"Since you could not come to me, dear Dick——" she began, with a little catch to her voice.

In my joy I went toward her quite drunkenly; she had braved much—the hazard of the winter seas—and all for my sake; and what words I said as I took her in my arms I do not know, but there was a three years' hunger in my soul for the very sight of her.

The moments slipped by with their rich content. It seemed but yesterday, and I was making my way through the fog to the entrance of that lane in Aldersgate Street. The wash of the river alongside became the muffled roar of London, rising and falling in the distance. In this world of change and chance, that which was of most worth to me was all unchanged. Yesterday and to-day remained the same, and so would the long vista of to-morrows, down which I seemed to look over the bowed head that rested against my shoulder.

Mary lifted her face to mine. It was the face of all my dreams, and yet a thousandfold more lovely than even my radiant memory had pictured it. I began to falter something of my deep sense of her love and courage, when there came a quick and not too light step into the cabin at my back, and I heard someone cry out in a voice that broke betwixt tears and laughter:

"Oh, Dicky—Dicky!"

It was our Meg, who threw her arms about my neck in so resolute a manner that she was like to strangle me on the spot, all the time crying, as she used to do when I was a boy in the north country:

"Oh, Dicky—Dicky!" And then she twisted me about so she might look into my face. "Eh, the great bearded fellow—yet who would not know him that had ever seen him!"

"Why, Meg!" I cried, when her hold of me had relaxed so I could fill my lungs.

"Meg, indeed, sir! Mistress Jarvis, if you please; and for these fifteen months past!" Mary interrupted, laughing.

"Is it so, Meg?" I asked.

"There's one who will have his way with a woman. Eh, Dicky, I had an honest wish to stay single, but who'd be proof against the fellow who says 'Set the day' forty times a day, I vow!"

And Meg looked both pride and displeasure; but it required only half an eye to see she was well satisfied to have been so earnestly wooed.

And Meg's altered state having received its due of recognition, there was all the news from home that I must hear, which Mary told me, while Meg beamed on us, adding her weight of asseveration where she thought the narrative would gain by it. Tom and Bet were living with my father and mother at Dane's Hill farm, so they should not be too lonely, and all were talking of coming to Virginia, especially Tom, who professed to see little use of younger sons remaining in England when there were these new continents of such fabulous richness needing men of English birth, and in such imminent hazard of being seized on by Jack Spaniard.

Here Marshall came to us from the deck.

"Which will it be—England or Virginia—Farraday?" he asked, smiling.

"Lord, sir, it has naught to do with that!" cried Meg.

And she said truly, for I was living in that world of perfect fancy which one may enter from the ends of the earth, and which knows neither England nor Virginia.

When Marshall and Jarvis had helped me to build one of the properest houses in all Virginia, Mary and I were married in the James Town church, which Lord De la Warr had ordered should be handsomely decked with flowers for the wedding; nor did his civility to us stop here: we must be entertained at a great banquet which he gave in our honour aboard his flagship.

Now, I care little enough to mutter over great names, being a Virginia planter and holding my acres from the crown, and inclining to treat all comers on an equal footing, whether above or below me it matters not; but my liking for his lordship rests on quite another footing than his worldly estate, since he was ever distinguished for his private virtues and his devotion to the welfare of our colony.

My own happiness, and those years of plenty Virginia was destined to know, seemed to have a common beginning. In due time I was given my grant of land, and with Master John Rolfe, who afterward married Pocahontas, I was one of the first settlers to experiment with the growing of tobacco, which has put pounds in all our pockets where there were but shillings before.

John Smith never again set foot on the soil of Virginia, though he won much fame further north as an explorer of new regions and as a writer of many useful books that bore upon his discoveries. Though I was destined never to see

him again, yet I heard from him many times by letter during the latter years of his life.

As might have been expected, Tom and Betty did eventually come out to Virginia. This was some two years after my marriage; and there was another interval of two years, when my mother and father followed them; and I have never heard it even whispered that they desired to go back.

THE END



1. The first part of the document is a list of names and dates.



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